

YOUR ATARI
INTERFACE

Michigan Atari Magazine

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NEODESK: THE ALTERNATIVE ST Desktop

NeoDesk File View Options

The screenshot displays the NeoDesk desktop environment. On the left, a window titled 'A:*,*' shows '2 selected items in 113590 bytes'. It contains icons for 'ICONEDIT', 'AUTO', and 'NEODESK.PRG'. Below these are several document icons with labels: 'NEODESKC.RSC', 'MEMFIL14.ACX', 'NEOQUEUE.ACC', 'MEMFIL14.RSC', 'NEODESKM.RSC', 'DESKTOP.INF', 'SNAPSHOT.ACC', 'PALLETE.ACX', and 'NEODESKC.INF'. A mouse cursor is visible near the bottom left. In the center, a vertical column shows drive icons: 'A' (Floppy Drive), 'B' (Floppy Drive), 'C' (Hard Drive), 'ICONEDIT.APP', 'Printer', and 'Trash'. On the right, a window titled 'B:*,*' shows '37 items in 308657 bytes'. It contains a grid of document icons with labels: 'SB.PRG', 'SBHI.RSC', 'SB.RSC', 'ACCOUNTS.SBF', 'ADDRESS.SBF', 'DEPOSITS.SBF', 'README.ASC', 'ACCOUNTS.1', 'ACCOUNTS.2', 'TEXT.DOC', 'ACCOUNTS.4', 'ADDRESS.1', 'ADDRESS.4', 'ADDRESS.6', 'ADDRESS.8', 'CLIENTS.2', 'CLIENTS.3', 'CLIENTS.6', 'DEPOSITS.2', 'DEPOSITS.5', and 'DEPOSITS.6'.

Also In This Issue:

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH
YOUR ST

64K Upgrade for 600XL

A Look At Support for
Atari 8bit

Reviews of ROGUE, GFA
Quick Reference Guide

AND MORE ...



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MAM

this Month

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From the Reader's Viewpoint

Review of a Review -- by Anon.
Dear Editor, MAM

I can keep my piece no longer. I must right in deference to Gordon T. Totty's deliterate ravens on the subject of "Strip Poker," one of my favorite things. So, he wanted to "oggle" the girls, did he? Ha! According to my "American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language," *ogle* means "to stare at impertinently, flirtatiously, or amorously." I think that's what the fathead tried to spell, don't you? So, what does "oggle" mean? I'll tell you, when he oggles he boggles my mind! (Double HA!)

Passed the way he batches up the Kink's English, I must also rigorously inject to his comments on the appearance of the gals. If he had ever seen a reel woman, even if only in the movies, he would depreciate the art worx more. I am a part-time professional gynecologist and, I insure you, each of these mammies has acute angina.

I don't know why you print this jerk's stuff; he obviously doesn't know wherefore he speaks. Who does he think he is to make fun of the dean of textual philology, Hew Hefner, just because Hew likes a robe and pipe? I'll bet Totty thinks he slipped this buy me, but I caught it right away! We are talking hereabout an American destitution. Hef, as we call him, has appeared on TV. More than once, two! Not only that, but a junior college in California has used the Playboy Textual Philology as the bases for a coarse in intra-personal dyanics.

Other than the peace by that Totty potty mouth, you have a fine magazine. Keep up the good work, but dump him if you please. I'd like to see more articles on basic programming in machine language. Let's get back to our routes!

Just print my initials because I am intimidated by familial with you-know-who as we are both from MACE. I wouldn't want to have to herd his feelings. Just sine me,

Malapropriately yours,
gtt

P.S. My wife reads his stuff and de-grees with me, but didn't want to cosine. She's very demur.

Dear Reader,
Your letter is one of the more interesting we have received lately, and so

we reprint it here in all of its mind-boggling detail. While we appreciate your desire to criticize Totty, we must confess that in the matter of the misspelled "ogle" he is blameless. The copy he submitted to us included the correct spelling; a gremlin in the editing or printing process must have added the extra "g."

As for the rest of your comments, of course we agree wholeheartedly with you. A concerned and active reader like yourself is unvaluable to the magazine and the rest of our audience. We do, however, note an occasional error in your letter. In the interest of making sure all of our readers fully understand what we think you meant, we have listed your words and our translations or other comments below, in the same order as the words appear in your letter:

piece ... We think it is your peace that you are no longer holding. We hope it is your peace, in any event.

right ... Write, right? Right!

deference ... Reference; don't be so humble.

deliterate ravens ... Illiterate ravings? You should be an expert on this!

Dictionery ... Dictionary. Spell checkers are very reasonable now; everyone should have one.

fathead ... Idiot, but a rose by any other name...

We did notice the degree to which your mind is boggled. If you can prove that Totty's article did it, you should contact a good attorney and sue him, but not us.

passed ... Past, we expect, but we are almost past caring.

batches ... Botches. There are a batch of botches in your letter!

Kink's ... King's, unless you know more about the King than we ever did.

rigorously inject ... Vigorously object? Your version is a bit more colorful.

reel woman (in the movies) ... You can be shot for puns like that!

depreciate the art worx ... Actually, that's just what he did with this software from ArtWorx.

insure ... Assure, or are you an insurance salesman when you are not practicing gynecology?

mammies ... No comment, not even with a ten foot pole...

acute angina ... How tragic! Let's start a fund.

jerk ... Idiot savant.

wherefore ... Why art thou Romeo? Perhaps you are right; the nine letter version of "why" packs more pizzazz.

textual philology ... Could this be code for Sexual Philosophy, or an obscure reference to the study of language? Cards and letters welcome.

Hew ... Who?

buy me ... Never in a million years! hereabout ... Whereabout?

destitution ... Well, on second thought, you may be right.

on TV ... two ... WOW! WOW!

bases ... Basis, unless you had something baser in mind.

coarse ... We bet it was!

dyanics ... Get out of here; this one isn't even in the dictionary yet.

peace ... No, piece, or is it peas?

Now we are getting confused, to.

potty mouth ... Amen.

programming in machine language...Did you used to wire boards? Still do?

routes ... Actually, we think we should get back to our roots, but we forgot the route. Besides, the Atari 400 with the membrane keyboard is gone. You know, they say you can never go home.

intimidatedly ... Don't be afraid of Totty. We have seen him and he is just a squirt. We hope you did not mean "intimately", as we don't want any of that going on around here.

familial ... Say, are you related to him?

herd ... Has that many feelings, does he?

sine ... OK, joker, what's your angle here?

malapropriately ... Never mind. Nothing we could add would rival this.

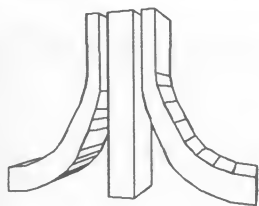
gtt ... An obvious alias!

degrees ... You and your wife went to the same school together?

cosine ... What's HER angle?

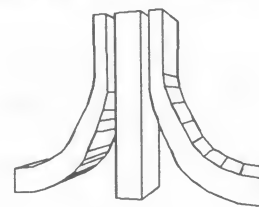
demur ... Are you a lawyer? One more letter from you and we'll demur!

Your Patient Editor
Next patient, please.



Atari News and Comment

News Analysis by Bill Rayl



The approach of summer seems to be heating up the Atari community and news abounds this month.

Atari Corp. has gone through a massive reorganization with the creation of a separate computer division company called "Atari Computer." The division is headed by Chuck Babbitt who had served as a marketing consultant to "several high-tech startups," and was a Vice President at Aston-Tate in the early 80's, according to Atari's Neil Harris. Atari Computer has also appointed Tony Gould as Vice President of Sales. Gould spent 10 years in sales with IBM and worked for Intelli-Design just prior to coming to Atari.

With the new company organization has come some promising signs. Atari has stopped using distributors and is now hiring Atari-employed sales representatives in an attempt to strengthen dealer ties. A newsletter specifically designed for dealers is now being produced and a telemarketing group has been added at the Sunnyvale headquarters.

The company has also added the public relations help of Winston and Winston, reported to have some expertise in the computer field with a background in Tandy, and plans for hiring an Advertising agency are in the works. Babbitt has reportedly stated that ST ads will be appearing soon on Cable TV only -- this has not been verified. There is not much specific info getting out, due to a corporate order that specifics not be leaked to the press during the two-month period Babbitt has been given to form a new corporate strategy and get the ball rolling.

Other promising signs from Atari affect both ST and 8bit owners. On the ST side, a new set of ROMs will be shipping in the fall -- of this year! The ROMs will contain some major changes and improvements, will cost around \$50 and will be shipped with Blitter chips. [Ed: We will keep you updated on the ROMs and will let you know when they "hit the street."] It has also been reported Atari will begin shipping 520STfm units with double-sided drives by year's end. No word as yet concerning (inexpensive) upgrades from Atari for current single-sided drive owners.

For the 8bit Atarians, XF551s are becoming more readily available, and Atari is reported to have a large stock of them due to increased production to meet demand. AtariWriter Plus 80 is nearing shipment -- I know, we've heard it before, but a pre-release version was made available to the San Leandro, CA, Atari group at the West Coast Computer Faire, and reports from Atari indicate

that the rest of us will see it soon too! The light pistol will also be available "in the near future," according to John Skruch, Atari's director of software development. The gun will be sold separately in the toy stores and packaged with a Bug Hunt cartridge for computer store distribution.

From all outward appearances, Atari is committing to a policy of renewed support for both dealers and end-users. Let's hope the signs aren't leading us to a dead end.

Atari isn't the only one releasing promising news for the 8bit -- Merrill Ward and Associates, Inc. has announced they will release an ST-like desktop program to give Atari 8bit owners what GEOS has given to Commodore 64ers. Appropriately named "Graphic Operating Environment" (GOE), the system will allow interface via joystick, keyboard or an ST mouse plugged into joystick port 1. GOE will be sold as a "super cartridge" that will include a drawing program, word processor, printer drivers, fonts and an icon editor (as well as the operating system, of course!).

Current plans are to sell the cartridge for between \$50 to \$60, and Merrill Ward is reportedly in negotiations with Atari for future bundling of GOE with the XE machines. If this all sounds interesting and you want to see more, you can get a demo version of GOE by sending \$5 to Merrill Ward & Associates, 255 N. El Cielo Rd, Suite 222, Palm Springs, CA 92262. Anticipated shipping date for the cartridge is by the end of July, and the \$5 for the demo will be applied toward the purchase price if you decide to buy!

We've recently heard a lot about SpringBoard's release (finally!) of NewsRoom for the 8bit Atari, but Springboard may have some stiff competition in News Station from Reeve Software (\$29.95, 48K disk). News Station allows use of any available Atari font in 64 different font sizes, and allows use of PrintShop icons, Micro-Painter and Micro Illustrator pictures and direct drawings from within News Station to be added to your text. When, purchased with the new News Station Companion (\$29.95, 48K disk), multi-page text files and unconverted Koala Pad graphics can be accepted and "banner" headlines can be added.

Total cost of the News Station package is \$10 more than NewsRoom, but with far more flexible font and graphic importation abilities. For more information on News Station and its Companion, contact Reeve Software, 29 W. 150 Old Farm Lane, Warrenville, IL 60555 (312)393-2317.

In the 8bit PD/shareware market, a new term-

mat program called De-Term 850 is making a big splash. One of the most talked about features is the built-in mini-version of Breakout, which can be played while *simultaneously* uploading or downloading. The program also has a windowing system "similar to the ST" and allows optional use of a LIST.BAT and MODEM.BAT batch file for loading phone lists from disk or sending commands to your modem at startup.

Currently, De-Term only supports Hayes compatible modems connected to the 8bit via 850 interface, ICD P:R:Connection, etc. The author, James Dillon, has not to our knowledge made any plans for releasing versions for other modems. Perhaps if enough people send in contributions for his software effort...

How many of you remember the ATR8000? Those of you who do, remember you could add IBM 5-1/4" and 8" drives (and now 3-1/2" too!) in any available densities and that the ATR8000 came with standard Centronics parallel printer port and RS232 modem port. On top of that, the ATR8000 could give your Atari full CP/M compatibility, and one more step up the ladder, this baby gave 8bit Atarians 16bit microprocessing power with CP/M-86 or MS-DOS operation! The ATR8000 came with the Z-80 microprocessor, 64K RAM, 4K ROM and Digital Research CP/M 2.2, with the RAM expandable to 256K which could be used as a RAMdisk.

For those of you who've never heard of this, would you believe it was developed in 1980? Why am I telling you this? Well, it seems that, even though the company that produced this (SouthWest Microcomputer Products) has long since gone out of business, one of the original designers, John McFarten, has a fair supply of the ATR8000 boards, cases and power supplies. He is interested in selling them at reduced prices (the hardware originally sold at a starting price of \$349.95), and he can be reached at (817) 924-7759 or (817) 572-3626 for price and availability.

> The ST market is seeing a flurry of activity as well, with a plethora of products being shown at the recent spring COMDEX (May 9-12). MegaByte Computers was showing the ST Accelerator, the 16 MHz add-on boards using a Mostek 68000-16 co-processing chip. The Accelerator is 8/16 MHz switchable and is listed in MegaByte's ads for \$199.95 (under the name Turbo ST, which has been changed for obvious reasons). MegaByte will be marketing the product, which is produced by Strange Systems of Webster, Texas. MegaByte is also planning to release an expansion bus for the ST that will come with 8 expansion connectors and allow the ST memory to be expanded to a whopping 16 Megs. There has been no announcement date of availability or price for this item. MegaByte Computer, 109 W. Bay Area, Webster, TX 77598.

Phone
981-1150

UNITED COMPUTER INC.

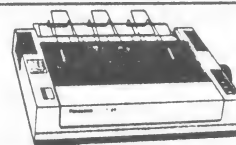
41818 Ford Rd. - Canton, MI 48187

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BBS
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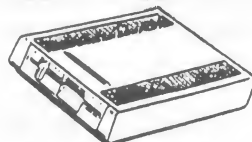
Atari 520ST Mono System	669.00
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Cash Prices - Not all items in stock - Prices subject to change - Sale Ends June 30, 1988

For all you Desktop Publishing fans out there who can't live without Postscript, a software emulator by the name of AltraScript was reported to be displayed at the Corporate Electronic Publishers show at the end of April. The software is apparently rather awkward to use, forcing one to print the PostScript pages to disk, boot AltraScript and then send the page to the printer.

For the DTP fan who can live with or without Postscript, TimeWorks' Publisher ST looks very good. It contains features not yet available in Publishing Partner, such as auto-hyphenation, text wrap around graphics, importation of GEM .IMG 300 dpi pictures and style sheets, to name just a few. The output is very clean and superb. [Ed: Look for a full review of Publisher ST in next month's MAM.] TimeWorks, 444 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield, IL 60015 (312)948-9200.

NeoCept has a couple of big hits with its new Word-Up (\$79.95) word processor and Fontz! (\$34.95), the GDOS font editor. Word-Up comes with ability to use GDOS fonts in multiple sizes; master page generation; variable page size; spell checker and thesaurus support; glossary and mail merge; left, center and right justification; graphic importation with auto text wrap around pictures; and all the other things you'd expect in a fully GEM-interfaced word processor. Fontz! allows you to create GDOS fonts from scratch or convert Amiga, Degas Elite, Hippoword and most importantly, Macintosh fonts to GDOS fonts! NeoCept, 908 Camino dos Rios, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360 (800) 666-8766 for orders/dealer inquiries only, for info call (805) 498-3840.

Gribnif Software of Hadley, MA, is reporting fairly good sales of its NeoDesk package. [Ed: See NeoDesk review elsewhere in this issue.] In a conference held on Delphi, Gribnif stated it has received "several hundred" orders already with the vast majority of purchasers sending in their registration cards with nothing but positive comments. A few (about 15 percent total) grumble about either the lack of a show as text mode or the amount of memory it takes (or both!). Gribnif has already announced an update will be available sometime in the fall which will add Text mode and many other features without increasing the program size.

> Another "Alternative Desktop" has appeared for the ST, this time as a shareware product (if you like it and continue to use it, then you pay for it). The program is VDOS (Virtual to Disk Operating System) and is geared mainly toward the power user/programmer but has features for everyone. The optimal system is a 1 Meg machine with hard drive. VDOS allows for 53 programs to be defined for later execution by a single mouse click or keyboard combo and over 45 DOS utilities that you would normally find in a good command line interpreter.

Using the "Pop-up" menus that come up from the bottom of the screen, VDOS brings together the

functionality and power of a CLI and the ease of use of a graphic environment. If you like the software, Marathon Computer Press asks that you send \$25 plus \$2 shipping and handling for which they will send you a 100+ page, professionally printed manual that shows you how to get the most out of VDOS, and they will place you on the mailing list for update notifications, etc. VDOS can be downloaded from the major networks and may even be on your local BBS or in your user group library. [Ed: If you cannot find a copy, VDOS is up on the Treasure CheST BBS, the official BBS of this magazine, (313)973-9137, 300/1200/2400 baud.]

Happy Computers, well-known maker of 8bit disk drive hardware/software modification/ enhancements is nearing release of the Discovery Cartridge System for the ST. The cartridge allows any ST to "read, analyze, format, write and verify virtually any floppy disk format used on *any* computer." It's main purpose is to allow users to make legitimate backups of protected software, but Magic Sac owners may find it even more useful, because the Discovery Cartridge can read and write Macintosh disks, and is reportedly five times faster at disk converting and costs less than the Translator One from Data Pacific.

Happy Computer makes no claims that its cartridge can be run simultaneously with the Magic Sac cartridge for direct access of Macintosh disks, though it says it may be possible because the Discovery Cartridge can be configured to allow another cartridge to be plugged in *at the same time* and chips can be added to the cartridge. Happy instead intends that Mac disks be converted directly to Magic format using their cartridge.

Other available features that can be configured by the user are 1) up to 4 floppy drives can be installed, 2) a battery backup clock may be added, 3) space for two ROM or EPROM (either 256 or 512K) chips has been left on the PC board. A switch can also be installed to allow for two separate 256K programs to be "online."

Price for the cartridge is \$249.95, but if you advance order "before we ship the first unit," you can get the Discovery Cartridge for just \$147. For more info and to see of the advance price is still available, contact Happy Computers, Inc., PO Box 1268, Morgan Hill, CA 95037 (408) 779-3830.

Another promising piece of hardware is the IBM box due out from Paradox by the end of the summer, assuming FCC approval. The FCC has "requested" some minor changes be made to the "ParaBox," which came before them a couple months ago. The box attaches to the entire back of the ST, with all the ST ports extending through the Parabox. Models will be available with two or eight expansion slots, both with 256K expandable to 640K and turn the ST into a 10MHz IBM. None of the ST memory will be used by the box, but you can run ST applications and IBM applications at

the same time. The units retail for \$350 and \$450 and should be available later this year. Paradox, if you recall, was the producer of the MS-EM software IBM emulator. Hopefully, Paradox will have better success with ParaBox. Paradox Enterprises, 150 S. Camino Seco, Suite #113, Tucson, AZ 85710, (602) 721-2023.

There is already a new version of the Universal Item Selector that should be out by the time you read this. The number of new features are too long to list here, so you can find more about version 2.0, the upgrade policy and price elsewhere in this issue.

Beckemeyer Development has announced that an implementation of UUCP, the UNIX file transfer/electronic mail/networking program, has been added to the MT C-Shell family. The program, which runs under MT C-Shell version 1.10 or higher, retails for 449.95 and registered C-Shell owners can get it for \$35. For more info, contact Beckemeyer at 478 Santa Clara Ave, Oakland, CA 94610, (415) 452-1129 voice, or (415) 452-4792 BBS.

Whew! That sure is a lot... and there's lots more, but I'm running out of room, so just one last item before I close.

If you have moved up from an 8bit system (Atari 400/800/etc, Apple II, Commodore 64/128) to a 16bit machine (Atari ST, Amiga, Apple IIGS, IBM/Tandy) and you have some old Electronic Arts software laying around, you can exchange it.

All you have to do is send in the manual cover from your old 8bit EA software and a check or money order for half the price of the 16bit version, and EA will promptly ship you the 16bit version of your favorite games. Call EA at (800) 245-4525, Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Pacific time for details.

If you call a company about something you've read in this magazine, tell 'em you saw it in the Michigan Atari Magazine!

Editorial Ramblings

Well, summer has hit the computer world and it seems that almost everyone is dying to get away from their machines and hit the beaches. A number of the participating clubs have asked if we would consider putting out a Summer issue of MAM instead of an issue every month. On top of that, the majority of advertisers are telling us "We don't advertise in the summer months...call us back in August or September." Needless to say, we can take a hint... and a vacation, too! We have decided to print a July/August issue instead of an individual issue for each of those months. That will help out the clubs that don't meet during those months, and at the same time, give us and the advertisers a break. For all you subscribers out there, you won't lose a thing because your subscriptions are for 6 or 12 ISSUES, not months.

Things are going fairly well for MAM...if you've seen copies of the last few issues of Computer Shopper, MAM has consistently been chosen one of the best user group-oriented publications each month. We would like to give a special *thanks* to all our contributors -- authors, artists and advertisers. Without you, there would be no Michigan Atari Magazine.

Speaking of artists, check out the new and all-original comic strip "Stanley and Knob" from Steve Volker (Tri-City Atari Group). You've seen Steve's artwork on the April and May issues; now he's turned his talent for creating "mousterpieces" to an innovative, humorous and thought-provoking look at the ST, computers in general and all of us. We've received a few month's worth of "Stanley and Knob" from Steve, and we think you're all going to enjoy getting to know these characters. Great job, Steve!

We've got a few other surprises in store for you in the near future... More on these as things are finalized -- wouldn't want to announce something too early like some companies we know.

In next month's issue, we'll have a report on all the goings-on at the June CES in Chicago. One of the new 8bit products which is reportedly going to be shown is the "Graphic Operating Environment" from Merrill Ward and Associates of Palm Springs, CA. (See "Atari News and Comment" for more info). Looks like it may be an interesting show, and we'll tell you all about it in the July/August issue.

Back to the present! As you've already seen from the cover, this issue contains a review of NeoDesk for the ST. This program, from Gribnif Software of Hadley, MA, is going to be a hot item... check out the review and then run to your local Atari dealer!

Also in this issue is an article from our 8bit hardware guru, Don Neff (MACE and WAUG), who tells us how to upgrade the 600XL to 64K. This article, along with Don's article for adding monitor outputs to the 600XL, which appeared in the February issue of MAM, will transform your 600XL into an 800XL. The only difference will be the casing! Look for more 8bit hardware articles from Don in the future...and now that Don took the *big* plunge and purchased a Mega 2, maybe we'll see some 16bit tinkering, too?

Other articles include a beginner's ST article on organizing your Desktop, the "Take ACTION!..." series from Gayle Sims, reviews of First Word Plus, Practical Microbuffer Mini 512 (whew!), GFA Basic Quick Reference Manual, and more. Enjoy.

Bill and Pattie Rayl

Teasers! A Look at the Support for the Atari 8Bit

By Gayle R. Sims (c) 1988

Unfortunately, commercial software and hardware support for the Atari 8bit has seen a *major* decline over the past year. Why is that? The developers and artists usually give one of three different reasons.

The first issue is, of course, piracy. Publishers claim the end profits do not support the development or production efforts for the software. This is true in any computer community, be it Atari, Commodore or IBM. No computer is immune to piracy or the illegal copying and distribution of products.

The second reason given is "Atari is not supporting the machine, why should we?" Every company has its share of "non-corporation" supporters and also has a track record of sloppy user support. Atari just happens to be better-known and more openly attacked, since it is closer to the users' level, being online with some national telecommunications networks. Enough said there, I believe.

The last reason seems to be a lack of end user support. Is this true, or are a few penalizing the *many* die-hard 8bit users?? Recently, Springboard released the 8bit version of the popular Newsroom desktop publishing package. When Springboard was asked why they released the software in this otherwise non-supported market, they said simply, "due to a write-in campaign hosted by Antic magazine, we believe the users want this product to come to market."

It took over four months and three programmers to get this project off the ground and into production. The system consists of Newsroom and three clip art disks sold separately. The system is impressive and looks much like the other computer versions available. Only time will tell if Springboard will be able to produce any more software for the 8bits or if the write-in campaign got results. Everything rests on this intense effort now, and for the sake of the 8bit community, I hope we do not let them down.

ICD/OSS, Inc. has long been an Atari 8bit supporter, providing one of the most widely used DOSes available for the Atari today -- SpartaDOS. Among its other products, such as hard drives and programming cartridges, ICD/OSS has quite a list. The latest venture for ICD/OSS is the long-awaited SpartaDOS-X cartridge, which will provide the same excellent DOS produced before on disk on a ROM cartridge.

Tom Harker, President of ICD/OSS, stated project development cost over \$100,000, and the cartridge is almost ready to be shipped to beta testers. He does feel the effort and financial outlay will be

made up for in sales and support from users. ICD/OSS has always provided an excellent support staff, never failing to help the user along with a purchase. I think this is a definite plus in ICD's favor, and, since the products are some of the best available, the SpartaDOS-X cartridge should do remarkably well.

Not every Atari software package has a commercial company standing behind it. Most often, in the world of "shareware," (software you pay for IF you like and use it) the support comes directly from the programmer.

Programmers such as Ralph Walden (8bit ARC/ARCX author), Keith Ledbetter (Express! terminal program author) and Roy Goldman (Daisy Dot I and II author) have put a lot of time and effort into their programs, with little in compensation or recognition.

No programmer releasing a product to the ShareWare Community plans on making major money, but never thought to be totally forgotten and abused. When you use a shareware program over and over, which most of us do, we are abusing it and its author, if we have not sent in our contributions and support.

"Sure," you say, "I have often spent some money to get the program" (if you downloaded it from a national commercial online service), but, you have to remember, these authors do not receive *any* commission from those services. Their only means of support is *you*. [ED: wouldn't it be nice if the services paid royalties to the programmers, as well?]

There are programs out now, released as shareware, used daily and not supported. Ten dollars for a complete terminal program, ARC utility, or enhanced printing utility program is cheap, if you compare it to the same thing on the commercial market. If you can afford to download the software from a major service, can't you afford to send \$10 or so to the author if you think it is worth it? Well?

Without these companies and authors, the support for the 8bit, or any other computer, will dry up. Only we, the end-user, can keep the ships afloat and continue to spur artists and authors to create fine products.

I can be reached by US Mail at: Gayle R. Sims, Suite #6-216, PO Box 4005, Carmichael, CA 95609-4005.

[Editors' Note: Your comments and opinions are always welcome about this subject or any other. You may upload an ascii file to our bbs (313) 973-9137, or mail us at the address on the back next to your label. We look forward to hearing from you!]

GFA BASIC: Quick Program Reference Guide for the Atari ST

Book Review by
Frank and Sally Nagy (CHAOS)

Preferred by many because of its power, accuracy and easy extensions for ST applications, GFA's BASIC is enjoyed by ST users worldwide. The language was first developed in Duesseldorf, West Germany, so it is no wonder the GFA Quick Reference Guide was also written in West Germany. Its two authors are intimately familiar with GFA BASIC. This handbook summarizes hundreds of commands and functions used in the language.

The publishers claim to give "instant information at your finger tips," and they mostly live up to it. It's nice to see this mass of info in one tidy package. It compiles materials found in the GFA BASIC Manual and GFA BASIC Book, an intermediate programming tutorial published by Michtron. But, this is a reference work for those with general knowledge of the ST and some hands-on experience with GFA BASIC. It will probably take at least an intermediate level programmer to fully appreciate it.

Three indices deliver aid to those searching for information on commands, uses and parameters. It's all there -- AES, Bios, Commands, Functions, GEMDOS, VDISYS and Xbios. Brief descriptions follow each listed command with further explanation of its proper syntax. The book detailed more specifics on commands and functions than the GFA Manual. The information is also described in a clear and fresh way.

A brief look at what some of the above means: AES, short for Application Environment Services, is responsible for graphic input functions like the Mouse-Menu-System; BIOS (Basic Input/Output System) and XBIOS (Extended Basic Input/Output System) are interfaces used to control disk access by sectors and for accessing other peripherals (i.e. printers and modems); GEMDOS (GEM Disk Operating System) is the actual operating system; VDISYS or VDI (Virtual Device Interface) routines support graphics and text output and settings.

Let's look at an example. In the command "BOX", we find:

BOX, PBOX [B, PB] Display a rectangle.

Under the box, you would then find the next few lines.

BOX x_left,y_top,x_right,y_bottom
(empty rectangle)

PBOX x_left,y_top,x_right,y_bottom
(filled in rectangle)

It displays a rectangle, either empty or filled in with a pattern. The command must be given in two coordinate pairs (x_left/y_top and x-right/y_bottom). These are the opposite diagonal corners of the rectangle.

While in the GFA BASIC Manual the same command would be described as follows:

Graphics Command Box

How: BOX x0,y0,x1,y1

Abbr.: B

Example: BOX 100,100,400,300
 BOX 500,300,700,100

Purpose: Draws a rectangle with diagonally opposite corners at (x0,y0) and (x1,y1) in the color set by the color command.

Explanation: The origin of the coordinates is the top left-hand corner of the screen. The given coordinates do not have to be in the screen area (0-639,0-399 in high resolution mode) in which case only part of the rectangle will appear on the screen (see 2nd example).

(See also DEFLINE)

The Graphic Command PBOX is found on another page:

Graphic Command PBOX

How: PBOX x0,y0,x1,y1

Abbr.: PB

See: BOX

GFA Quick Reference consistently gives commands in an easy to understand format. Given the situation, more detailed or concise explanation is given.

A few mistakes were found. In the GFA Editor section on page 6, the book mis-lists <Shift + F7> as the means to scroll to the top of the screen page when it should read only <F7> to pageup. Page 31 has the filled circle command described with the "P" left off (Pcircle).

Also, it is a little disconcerting to be reading along and suddenly find yourself thrust into haupt Deutsche (High German) for a few words. Although this happens only once, do you have any idea what, "der linken, oberen Ecke" and "der rechten, unteren Ecke" mean?

The rewards of a wealth of usable information are well worth putting up with these few minor mistakes and idiosyncrasies.

I'm keeping this book right by my computer for quick reference along with the GFA BASIC Manual and the GFA BASIC Book.

GFA BASIC Quick Program Reference Guide for the Atari ST is distributed by Abacus for \$14.95. GFA BASIC is distributed by Michtron for \$59.95.

Practical Microbuffer Mini 512 Print Buffer from Practical Peripherals

ST Hardware Review by Byron Johnson (GLASS)

Most of us know the practicality of print buffers and what time-savers they are. Unfortunately, they use up valuable RAM and always seem to be sized too small or large for the job. Finally, someone has introduced a hardware buffer both affordable and small enough to fit on anyone's computer desk.

Practical Microbuffer Mini 512 by Practical Peripherals (a mouthfull!) has solved this problem by using an external buffer. This frees up RAM and is always available when needed. It measures 4" wide by 5" deep by 1" high with an external power supply.

The circuit board has four sockets for 256K DRAMs (dynamic random access memory) and four sockets for 1Meg DRAMs giving the user the option of running any buffer size from 32K to 512K, depending on what chips are used.

The only stipulation is chips must all be the same size. I selected four 256K DRAMs, inserted them in the correct sockets, made sure the memory select jumper was on the correct pins, turned on the power and started printing. Everything worked fine the first time!

The Microbuffer costs \$100.00 with 32K DRAM already installed. I bought four 256K chips (150 nano-seconds) for \$9 each (They used to sell for \$3.50 before the prices went up.).

So, for \$136.00 plus tax, I had a 128K stand-alone buffer and when the megabit chips come down in price, I'll be able to upgrade to 512K. At one time, the megabit chips were selling for 26 dollars. Now that the US is starting to manufacture them, the prices should drop below 15 dollars before long. Buying a stand-alone buffer makes sense if you plan to upgrade your printer to a faster 9-pin or a 24-pin model.

Once you have a large buffer available, you can start using it as a print spooler by sending a text file to the printer, then a top of form command, then send another text file, a top of form, and so on. While your printer is working for perhaps an hour, you'll be able to run another program.

The supplied manual covers possible problems and solutions, discusses handshaking, and even tells about a built-in "self-test" mode and how to use it.

There's an LED that lights up for power on, but during self-test mode, it will check the memory and blink either fast for memory fault and print out the location of the bad chip or blink slow for correct operation. The unit comes with a five-year parts and labor warranty, very unusual in today's market.

This buffer really shines with a graphics pro-

gram like Publishing Partner(PP). A typical PP page will use up at least 200K of graphics memory, and take 15 to 20 minutes printing on a 80 cps printer like an Epson MX-80. Now you'll be able to start working on the second page while printing the first page.

Many CAD programs generate a file of perhaps 40 kilobytes, but will take up about 200K while printing. Even word processors can tie up your computer for minutes at a time. With a hardware buffer, it's only ten seconds and you're back on the keyboard.

Printing a 51K text file from the desktop takes one and a half minutes to load the buffer and eighteen minutes to print the file. The buffer frees up the computer for sixteen and a half minutes! If you print a lot of text, a print buffer could save you time and make your computer sessions more productive.

Practical Peripherals, 31245 La Baya Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91362 (818) 991-8200



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Take ACTION! with Your Programming!

Number Four in a Series by Gayle Sims (c) 1988

You may be asking, "Oh sure, I know how to enter a program now, but then what do I do with it? Do I need to save it? How do I save it? Does it need to be compiled? What form is it stored in on the disk? How do I run it to see if it works?" Lots of common questions, which have easy answers!

First of all, before any program can be "RUN" or executed, you will have to Compile it with the ACTION! compiler. Easy enough, since the compiler is already accessible from the monitor. From the monitor command line, COMPILE is the simple command to remember. It can be one of a few forms:

COMPILE <return>: Compiles the code currently in the ACTION! editor.

C <return>: Same as above...you are allowed to use the first letter as an abbreviation.

C "D1:MYFILE.ACT" <return>: Compiles the program "MYFILE.ACT" from device D1:.

One of the features of the ACTION! compiler is the error checker. If the compiler finds a syntax error, structural error or an illegal call, etc., in your program, it will abort the compile. It will show you the line where the error occurred, and give you an error number. The error numbers will correspond to the errors listed in the back of your manual. Also, it will show errors that are normally shown within the Atari Operating System.

If your program compiled without errors, typing "RUN" from the monitor prompt will execute your program. This is the same as loading a binary file from DOS.

Always remember to save your files every few lines, and *before* you compile or run a program. It will save you time in the long run, in case something happens, like a system crash, cat's chewed the cord or the power goes out!

All source code can be stored on disk with the NAME.ACT format. The .ACT extender reminds you that it is an ACTION! file which has not been compiled. To save your source code, the command was <CTRL><SHIFT>W while you are in the editor.

Once the file has been compiled and you wish to save the working program, you will need to WRITE it to disk with this command (from the monitor) W "D1:FINISHED.COM" <return>.

This command saves your compiled source code as an executable program file. As I stated before, you will be able to load it from DOS as a binary file. Those of you who are SpartaDOS users, you

just type FINISHED from the D1: prompt and the program will load and run, like all binary files, as long as it ends with the .COM extender!

See, told you it was easy! Get ready for the next issue, we will be putting all this new knowledge to work in a real program!!!

Ordering and support for ICD/OSS products are available by calling 815/968-2228 from 8AM to 5PM CST Monday through Friday. For more information, write to ICD/OSS, 1220 Rock Street, Rockford, IL 61101.

I can be reached by US Mail at: Suite #6-216, PO Box 4005, Carmichael, CA 95609-4005.

Super 8Bit Graphics!

By David Bryant (GKAUG)

The May 1988 Issue of Analog Magazine has a way to display high detailed graphics with 80 x 96 resolution. Listing #4 is a kaleidoscope demonstration but it requires several steps to get it going. The following will make listing #1 and #4 a ML program that can be run from DOS or named AUTORUN.SYS for instant graphics.

1. First change line 1160 in listing #4 (APACKAL2.OBJ) to:
1160 DATA 2,1,252,96,254,96,3,0,2,224,2,225,2,
0,96,0,617
2. Now copy listing #1 (APACSYS.OBJ) and listing #4 to another disk.
3. Use the ATARI DOS 2.0 or 2.5 copy with append to join the two files. (You type what is shown in *italics* below, hitting RETURN after each line entered.)
C
COPY--FROM, TO?
D1:APACKAL2.OBJ, APACSYS.OBJ/A
4. Rename APACSYS.OBJ to AUTORUN.SYS.

What you have done is add some code to APACKAL2.OBJ so the address where it is loaded (\$6000) is put into "RUNAD." After the file is loaded, instead of control being passed back to DOS, it is passed to the loaded program and the graphics demo is run automatically. Sure makes it a lot easier.

My thanks to Ian Chadwick's "Mapping the Atari" by Compute! for the programming hints.

64K Upgrade for Your 600XL

By Don Neff (MACE, WAUG)

Introduction

The February, 1988 issue of Michigan Atari Magazine contained my article about adding video monitor outputs to the 600XL. My assumption, while writing that article, was you would use it with a memory upgrade to create an 800XL from your 600XL. This assumption was reasonable because I believed (and still believe) that several people in the Atari community developed do-it-yourself memory upgrades for the 600XL just as they did for the rest of the Atari 8bit line (MPP put out a commercial plug-in 64K upgrade).

To my surprise, not one of my local fellow hardware hackers knew of such an upgrade article (although they too said someone must have written one). That left me only one option -- design a 64K memory upgrade for the 600XL myself. This is my first (and last!) 8bit memory upgrade project.

The Project

There are three possible memory upgrade methods for the 600XL. The first is to use eight separate 4164 memory chips just like the 800XL. The temptation for choosing this path is that the chips are easily obtained. In fact, you or a friend may have several 4164 or 4264 RAM chips left from a previous XL/XE 256/320K upgrade.

Unfortunately, this type of an upgrade would require you to cut several circuit traces and wire in a couple of extra addressing chips with a dozen jumpers. Besides, we'll be using those extra 4164 memory chips in a 64K parallel printer buffer in a future article.

A second possibility would be to use a pair of easily obtained 256K memory chips, each chip storing 4 bits of every 8bit byte. This would require complex multiplexing of the data lines which would, in turn, slow down your computer.

The third possibility, and the one we'll be using, requires some special RAM chips. This is offset by the convenience of not cutting any circuit traces or adding extra addressing chips. In fact, we'll only be adding three jumpers to get the address signals we'll need! First, let's look at why the extra address signals are even needed at all.

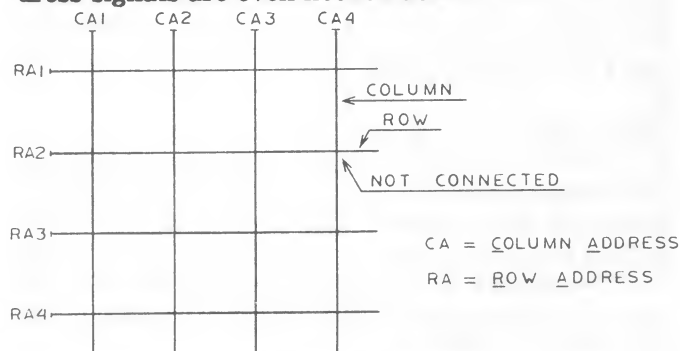


Figure One

How Memory Works

Figure 1 shows a typical matrix which we are going to use to illustrate RAM operation. Every line in Figure 1 represents a wire. The Horizontal wires are called "Rows" and the Vertical wires are called "Columns." There is no connection between any row wire and any column wire. There also is no connection between any row wire and any other row wire. Likewise, there is no connection between any of the column wires. Each wire is independent and has its own individual Number to indicate its location or "Address." The number also includes a prefix to indicate if the number is for a Row (R) or Column (C).

The first row wire is labeled Row Address 1 which is abbreviated RA1. Row wire two is labeled RA2, row wire three is RA3, and so on. Similarly, the first Column wire is labeled Column Address 1 or CA1. The rest of the column wires follow this numbering sequence just like the row wires.

Since every row and column has a unique number, the points where they cross are also unique. Figure 2 shows the upper left corner of the matrix from Figure 1. We've connected a light bulb at each crossing point. One lead of each bulb is attached to a row wire. The other lead of the bulb is attached to a column wire. The battery at the left has to follow a strict rule: one battery lead can touch only row wires and the other battery lead can touch only column wires. Also, only one row and one column can be touched at a time.

If we touch one battery lead to Row wire 2 (RA2) and the other battery lead to Column wire 1 (CA1) then light bulb "C" will light up. The current flows through CA1, into the bulb and out through RA2 to get back to the battery. Bulb "A" can't light up because there is no path for the electricity once it gets to RA1. Electricity needs a complete path to get back where it came from before it can do any work such as lighting a bulb. We would have to move the battery lead from RA2 to RA1 to light bulb "A." What would happen to bulb "C" if we did that? What must we do to light bulb "B?" How would you light bulb "D?"

Let's replace those four light bulbs with four capacitors. Now when you touch the battery leads to RA2 and CA1 capacitor, "C" will be charged up (capacitors act like short-lived batteries). Later, we can check all the capacitors by applying the leads of a voltmeter to the row and column wires. When the voltmeter leads touch RA2 and CA1, the voltmeter will show that capacitor "C" has a charge on it. Our matrix "remembered" that the battery leads touched RA2 and CA1 because of the charge on capacitor "C" at their intersection. The matrix also "remembered" none of the other row or column

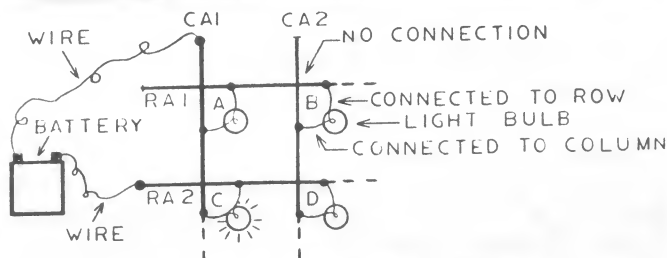


Figure Two-Matrix Addressing

wires were touched by the battery leads because none of the other capacitors were charged.

Each computer memory chip contains thousands of capacitors which "remember" by holding a charge. Each of these capacitors represents a single bit of information. A bit can be only one of two states -- "One" (High or On) or "Zero" (Low or Off). The capacitors represent these states by being charged for a One and discharged for a Zero. A computer stores data in memory as Ones and Zeros by charging or discharging the appropriate capacitors. The computer reads memory by checking which capacitors are charged and which are discharged and converting this information back to Ones and Zeros again.

Notice with the two rows and two columns of Figure 2, we can elect to light any bulb at one of four intersections. This is called a 2-by-2 matrix which gives four possible choices (2 rows multiplied by 2 columns = four intersections). To increase the number of intersections (memory locations) we need to add more row and column wires. Figure 1 has twice as many rows and columns (four each) as Figure 2. This four-by-four matrix gives 16 intersections. Increasing the rows and columns by a factor of two increased the available memory by a factor of four. A few wires make a large difference in the number of memory locations available.

We need only to add two jumpers to gain two address lines and a third jumper for a column select line to increase the 600XL memory to 64K.

Making the Modification

Open the case of your 600XL and remove the circuit board. The 4416 (4 bit by 16K) memory chips, U11 and U12, are located at the front right corner of the cartridge holder. Gently remove both of these chips and replace them with HM50464P (4 bit by 64K) memory chips (or equivalent).

Remove U16 (a 74LS51 chip to the left of U11)

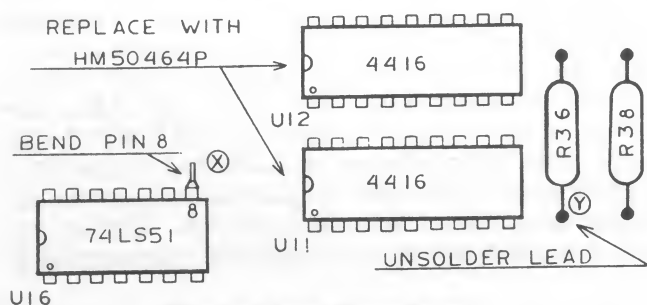


Figure Three-Ram Area

and bend pin #8 up so it sticks straight out from the chip body as shown in Figure 3. Insert U16 back into its socket. Unsolder and lift the lead of resistor R36 indicated as point "Y" in Figure 3. Solder a jumper between this resistor lead (point "Y") and pin #8 of U16 (point "X"). Insulate the ends of the jumper so they will not touch other parts of the circuit.

Locate U5 and U6 (74LS158) which are directly in front of U11 and U12. These chips handle the row and column addressing inside the memory matrix. We have to add two lines to these chips. Gently remove U5 and bend pin #3 up so it sticks straight out from the chip body as shown in Figure 4. Insert U5 back into its socket. Now remove U6 and bend its #10 pin out and replace it back in its socket. Notice that the two pins you bent are nearly touching the other chip. Cut enough off of each of the two pins to prevent any shorts.

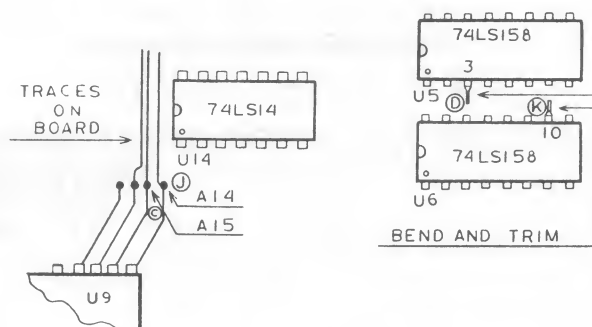


Figure Four-Address Area

Locate U14 which is to the left of U5 and U6. Notice the circuit traces to the left of U14. We are interested in the two traces indicated in Figure 4 as points "C" and "J". Connect jumper from point "C" to pin #3 of U5 (point "D" in Figure 4). This jumper sends address bit A15 to U5. Connect jumper from point "J" to pin #10 of U6 (point "K" in Fig. 4). This jumper sends address bit A14 to U6.

Make sure all your IC chips are inserted properly with their #1 pins in the lower left corner. Check your jumper wiring against Figure 3 and Figure 4. You should have a jumper from point X to point Y. You should have a second jumper from point C to point D and a third jumper between points J and K. Make sure the jumper ends are insulated to prevent shorts with nearby objects. Reassemble your computer case and run the memory self test as a final check.

Other Memory Upgrades

I won't be doing any other 8bit memory upgrade articles because the subject has been covered by dozens of other writers. The quality of the numerous do-it-yourself memory upgrade articles varies from excellent down to ridiculous (one upgrade uses 30 chips to give 128K which isn't compatible with anything else).

The upgrade article you use should meet certain standards to insure the success of the finished upgrade. The standards I suggest are: Clear writing; Complete detail; Good drawings; No mistakes; Sensible design; XE Compatibility.

I know of only three people who have met those standards with every one of their projects. They are: Scott Peterson, Jay Torres and Claus Buchholz. If you are trying to decide between several articles about the same modification, choose one authored by any of these three gentlemen. Your chances of success will improve and you'll be delighted with their trouble-free designs.

Parts Sources

Usually I try to design the items in these articles with Radio Shack parts. That's only because they are the most convenient place to buy parts -- not the best. Unfortunately, they don't carry much variety, so we are going to start using other parts sources. Write to each one and request their free catalogs or flyers.

Digi-Key, 701 Brooks Ave. South, PO Box 677,
Thief River Falls, MN 56701

Dick Smith Electronics, PO Box 8021, Redwood
City, CA 94063

Mouser Electronics, PO Box 9003, Lakeside,
CA 92040

Jameco Electronics, 1355 Shoreway Road,
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Rogue, an Epyx Adventure

ST Software Review by Patricia Snyder-Rayl

Close your eyes for a moment, and (oops! open them back up to keep reading!) imagine you're a solitary, red-haired figure named Rodney about to embark on the adventure of a life-time -- or two or three! You feel some irresistible force directing your movements -- left, right, up and down -- throwing you into closed doors, hidden treasure, welcome food and water, and the most fearsome monsters you could dream of.

Frantically you battle for your life, ever urged on by the knowledge of unexplored regions in this evil and twisted Dungeon of Doom with untold riches -- not to mention you're on a quest for the sacred Amulet of Yendor to restore order to the world you used to call home.

You fight through the many levels and past the many monsters such as nymphs who steal magic items but don't harm you, or giants, vampires and invisible phantoms who can kill with one blow. Enchanted armor lies along the way to help ward off the fatal blows along with magic potions to help you see in the dark. Scrolls, wands or rings, to help control your appetite if food is scarce, also can be found among the ruins and caverns of this horrifying place. The path is fraught with danger, but you are stout of heart and know the fate of the world rests on your sword.

Rogue, from Epyx, is an excellent game for the beginner and intermediate game player. It may be a bit limited for the more advanced gamer, especially after Dungeon Master, but I still recommend this "oldie-but-goodie." Rogue has been available for the ST for two years now, and was one of the first ST games available. It's still holding its own.

There are two modes to view the screen: close-up to your character or far above him seeing the whole level, not room by room. This keeps you from getting lost, since you just have to hit the space bar to see where you are on the level, and hit the bar once again to see the actual action.

Rogue creates the rooms in each level randomly, so there is no use in mapping...the game is different each time you play. Similarly, treasure, food and magic items are randomly placed on each level, which can help and hinder you. This can make for frustrating play as you frantically fight off monsters while searching for food; or it can be lots of fun to walk into a room filled with goodies!

Rogue comes on one single-sided (copy protected) disk and runs on any ST with a color monitor. When we first bought it, we were still loading TOS from disk, which ate up half the 512K memory, and the program ran fine! Eventhough Rogue has been available for a long time, it's still a good game and a bargain (\$20 to \$30 at local dealers or mail order). Epyx, 1043 Kiel Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94089.

Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the World of Atari ST computers

An Epidemic strikes

In the past few months, a scourge has found it's way into the computer community. Benign programs, while running normally suddenly become data killers, attacking the information stored on hard drives or floppies, rendering them useless. The cause-- *Computer Viruses*.

Computer Viruses have been around for several years, and have in the past caused widespread damage to valuable programs and databases. Their impact has been significant and concern over the susceptibility of all computers to invasion from these potentially harmful programs has grown recently as a new wave of these killers hits.

What are Computer Viruses ?

Computer viruses are first and foremost, programs with unintended side effects. They are programs written with the express intent of invading your computer programs, (unknown to you of course) and in their worst form, causing serious damage to the programs they infect.

Like a human virus, once implanted, the virus will strike it's victim with deadly certainty. The effects can be disastrous. Some viruses are meant as pranks and will simply print a message of some sort like "*Your computer has been invaded by Alien beings.*" Harmless viruses will do no further damage, and once their message has been displayed, the virus dies and goes away. In this guise, they are simply a programmer's way of showing his skill. His silly way of laughing.

Regrettably however, the majority of Viruses infecting computers are not of this benevolent type. Most of these secret programs are meant to destroy or harm your valuable data and if undetected, will certainly do so.

Generally they are directed at destroying data on hard drives, but they can and do also infect floppy disks as well. As a matter of fact, this is the method that most Viruses use to travel from system to system, spreading their destructive code as they are copied and distributed.

The ultimate effect of any virus is up to the programmer of the clandestine program. If a programmer chooses to create code with devastating results, then once unleashed, the code will effectively corrupt any system it comes in contact with. If the programmer chose to create a Virus to kill your data, you can be certain that it will do so if it is not detected, and neutralized.

One thing is certain, they do their mischief with your interaction, since *you* must cause them to run.

Viruses descend from a concept created many years ago, called a "*Trojan Horse*." In the 1950's, stories circulated about a payroll program that stopped when a certain programmer's name was removed from the file. To reactivate the file, they had to reinstall the programmers name. Presumably, this was his way of preventing the company from ever firing him, or his revenge for their having done so. There were many stories of operating systems that would display strange messages for one day every year - on a particular staff member's birthday.

These programmers were, of course, burying lines of code deep within their programs and routines. Because the side effects came as such a surprise to the other users of the system, the reference to the famous horse full of Trojan soldiers seemed appropriate.

A virus takes the Trojan Horse one step further. One of its side effects is to spread itself from one program to another, much like a common cold does between people. Hence the name, "*Virus*." A virus spreads by inserting copies of itself onto other programs on the same Hard Drive. This process is possible because most

systems allow you full Read/Write access to all of your personal files. Clever programmers, intent on implanting their particular nasty virus can even bypass the Read only aspect of a file by simply acting as you, and requesting a change of status on the file.

How Do you get infected ?

Well, as a matter of fact, it is disturbingly easy. You pick up a disk from a swap meet, or as mentioned, from someone elses' hard drive. Someone may give you a "cracked" copy of a commercial program that has been infected. Once you run these programs, you have infected your system. Some viruses can lay dormant for years, so if you pass along the infected file to a friend, you have just spread the disease.

A recent outbreak occurred at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, where an infectious virus spread among campus PC's. The clever assassin eluded capture by clinging to other programs and then eating at data files the fourth time that the newly infected program was used. The virus erased the user's File Allocation Table (FAT) and zero sector boot tracks, leaving files beyond help from any damage-restoring utilities.

Virus programs are most often hidden in what appears to be a useful piece of shareware or Public Domain software, especially those planted on Bulletin Boards. Taking a file from one of these systems is risky. If you do manage to get an infected file, and then copy it to your hard drive, you are asking for trouble. Trusted employees who may have a grudge may also plant the virus on a LAN network server, and thereby provide the potential for spreading the virus with incredible swiftness.

It will never happen to me !!!

In December of 1987, the massive worldwide electronic mail system of the IBM corporation had to be shut down because of the uncontrollable proliferation of a chain letter Christmas greeting called "*XMAS.EXEC*." Someone had inserted a virus into the system. This one ran wild, out of control. It was fortunate for IBM, that it was a harmless virus that merely sent Christmas greetings to everyone. *It happened to IBM !* Now imagine that

Flying the St continues...

it can't happen to you. If it can happen to IBM, believe me, it can happen to anyone.

Is there a cure ?

Fortunately, there are several methods of preventing a virus from spreading, or damaging your files. If you are capable of reading machine specific code and have the time to scan all new programs for infection, this is the safest method. Unfortunately, this is not for the majority of us. There are however several programs now released into the public domain that will spot many of the current viruses, and correct the problem if it exists. One of these programs for the ST is called "VIRUSKIL.PRG" and can be found on most local BBS's. You might want to grab a copy of it, but **BEWARE** because it too could be a Virus in disguise. If you suspect a program could be a Virus, *Don't use it!*

ST owners are less susceptible to this type of damage because of the way that the ST boots. The ST does not require a full disk read every time a disk is loaded into the drive, so the chances of spreading a virus are less likely. Our Amiga friends are not so lucky. Neither are Mac users. Also, many of the viruses are dependent upon a system being alive at all times. Once you shut off a system, many of the viruses will die, but they can reappear if you re-infect your system by using the same disk again.

Be careful, and you will most likely be ok. Chances are, that is

Don't panic, there may be no need...

All of this rhetoric on Viruses and their effect on your personal computer may in fact be just so much hyperbole. Let's look at the facts. For well over two months now, the computer industry has wallowed in it's usual high octane hype about a new news item - the virus - . It may

be stricly that. Some of the rumors about what viruses have purportedly done are wildly speculative at best. Ask yourself this question. Do you know anyone *personally*, who has been hit by a virus ? I know a lot of people who run, have access to, or own computers. Their numbers are in the thousands. None of them have yet been hit by a virus. I also run a BBS called system EX-10 Canada (free plug !) It is the largest free access Database in the world, and to date none of our thousands of callers has ever reported that they have been hit by a virus. What that suggests is that the problem may be more fiction than fact. Let there be no doubt about this though. There are viruses out there that are real and deadly, there just aren't a whole lot of them. Thank goodness for that..

A nightmare on Elm Street, part 3

By the time you read this, May 13th will have come and gone. According to many rumors circulating when this article was written (early April) this is the D-Day for Viruses. That infamous friday is supposed to be the day that the Virus strain MS-DOS is supposed to attack computers around the world, doing their worst. I thought that Freddy was limited to Elm street!

If Viruses were as widely spread as rumors suggest, then many world wide computers will have died on that fateful Friday the thirteenth. If no major plague has struck, then this will have been just another of the speculative rumours that spread so rampantly in the computer arena.

This much is certain. viruses are not new, they have existed in one form or another for almost as many years as there have been programmers. What is new is the suggestion that since some brilliant, though misguided, programmers decided to attack some of the major computer installations around the known universe, that they are now poised to strike against the installed base of personal computers around the world. Like most serial crimes, it is presumed that there will be clones of viruses for most computers made today. I suppose it's

possible, but highly doubtful in my opinion.

How much reaction therefore is appropriate? Under-react and you just may be the guy who gets it in the disk drive. Over-react, and you may give yourself ulcers over something not worth the trouble. It is certainly safe for me to predict that there will be Virus attacks in the future, and I won't predict that you will be hit. The choice of reaction is totally up to you. Safe is always better than sorry, and you may want to at least consider your sources of software. Take a few moments to at least check out anything that appears suspicious. At the very least, write protect your diskettes. The virus is helpless against that simple little defense.

NEWS notes..

Atari is reportedly entering the monitor business and is expected to show a prototype of a 1260 by 960 pixel colour display at COMDEX. Although production has not yet started on the new monitor, it will be made in the USA. Currently Atari monitors are manufactured in the Far East..

The New monitor will offer four resolution modes including CGA, EGA and VGA. Reportedly they will operate at 1260 by 960 pixels with 16 shades of grey.

The unit has a 100 MHz bandwidth and will be priced under \$1,000. Atari plans to sell the monitor on an OEM basis as well as bundling it with it's new Transputer computer, and the 68030 based PC's, all of which feature the CPU circuitry on a single card and share one basic chassis.

The single card system shown in Europe at the Hanover faire differs from the motherboard based system shown by Atari at COMDEX last November.

Both the Transputer and the 68030 computers will have 4 Mbytes of RAM, a 3.5", 720 or 1.44 Mbyte floppy drive, and a 44 Mbyte hard drive installed. An 80 Mbyte hard drive and a colour monitor will also be offered.



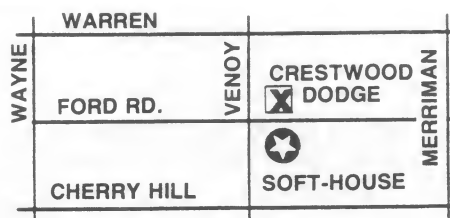
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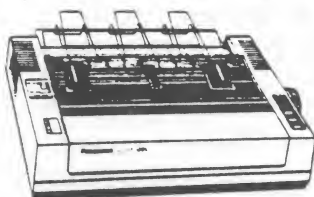
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PER CASE

Word Processing on an Atari ST: First Word Plus

By Thomas P. Sturza (MACE)

As a new ST user, I knew that I wanted a word processor that was easy to use, supported my printer and had a spell checking feature. I decided to ask the experts, the members of our ST SIG, what word processor they recommended.

Initially, they recommended that I purchase 1st Word by GST Software. However, they also indicated that I would be up and running faster if I chose ST Writer, because it was almost an exact copy of the AtariWriter+ software that my entire family had been using on our 8bit computers. In either case, they said, I wouldn't have the spell checking feature that I desired. I would have to purchase a separate spell checking program.

So, I downloaded a copy of ST Writer from a local BBS and gave it a try. It was almost identical to AtariWriter, and, for the most part, would be an adequate word processor for me and my family.

But it didn't have a spell checker!!!! And I strongly believe that a spell checking feature from within the word processor would serve our purposes better than an external one.

I soon discovered that I could have everything I desired, all in one package. The program was called "1st Word Plus" by GST Software. The only problem appeared to be that GST Software was located in England and there wasn't a US distributor for the software yet. Well, Atari Explorer magazine came to my rescue.

In the "Letters to the Editor" column, they listed a company that signed a distribution agreement with GST Software to market "1st Word Plus" in the US. This company is Prospero Software, 100 Commercial Street, Suite 306, Portland, Maine 04101, Ph: (207) 874-0382.

I gave them a call a few days before a major holiday and had a very nice discussion with one of their technical people. I asked how I could purchase 1st Word Plus, since there didn't appear to be any dealers selling the software yet. I was told that I could purchase the program directly from Prospero for \$99.95 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. I could pay for my purchase by personal check, money order or by using my MasterCard or VISA charge cards. I could order either by mail or by telephone.

I said that I would take one, charged it to my Visa and was told I would have it within 10 days. Only a few days later, UPS delivered my copy of 1st Word Plus. A company that delivers what it promises -- amazing!

Well, my son and I are now learning to use the new word processor. It does appear to be a bit harder to learn than ST Writer, but it also has many additional features and a spell checker. After we get familiar with the program, we'll see about writing another article for the Journal. By the way, this article was written using "1st Word Plus" and my initial feelings are "I LIKE IT!!!"

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GIGANT WALL SIZED POSTERS.

Learning to Live with Your ST

By Bill Rayl

Organizing Your Desktop

If you're one of the newcomers on the ST block, chances are you've never used a system quite like the one you now own. Learning to work with and in the GEM environment can be a confusing – and often frightening – experience. Hopefully, this (and future planned) articles will help you become more comfortable with using the machine, teach you a few tricks that aren't mentioned in the manuals and generally give you an overview of what the ST can do for you.

What is GEM?

GEM stands for Graphics Environment Manager, and it is through GEM that we communicate with the ST most of the time. You can think of GEM as a translator, interpreting your commands (clicks of the mouse button, etc.) and telling the operating system of the ST what those commands mean. In the same way a DOS such as MS-DOS or SpartaDOS interacts with a system, GEM is an interface between you and your computer. The difference is that GEM uses icons, windows and dialog boxes instead of command words or menus.

Much of your interaction with GEM will be from the ST Desktop, primarily for disk functions such as getting directories.

In this first article, let's focus on setting up your ST Desktop in an organized fashion. We'll go through explaining how to "customize" your icons and various setups for disk directories. Then, we'll see some suggestions for organizing the Desktop that may not have occurred to you. And, finally, we'll save all our hard work so the ST will remember the setup.

A Simple Resolution

Let's jump right in! For those of you who have color monitors (or color and monochrome monitors), you will want to decide which screen resolution you want as your default. Most people choose medium resolution, which gives an 80 column display.

Since the default is low resolution, you will need to change this if you want 80 columns. Also, if you're one of those people who switch between color and monochrome monitors and want medium resolution whenever using the color screen, you will need to follow these instructions as well. If you set up for medium resolution with the color monitor, your monochrome Desktop will not be affected. However, if you set up your Desktop with the monochrome monitor, you will be dumped into low resolution when switching to the color monitor!

Without further ado, let's get into medium rez. Move the mouse pointer up to the "Options" entry at the top of the Desktop. This will cause a "Drop

Down Menu" to appear on your screen. Move the mouse pointer to the option labeled "Set Preferences" and click the left mouse button once. You will be presented with three choices: Low, Medium and High.

The "High" choice will appear lighter in color than the other two, indicating that it is not a valid option (The ST knows that your color monitor isn't capable of monochrome display). To change to medium resolution, all we need to do is place the mouse pointer over the "Medium" choice and click the left mouse button once.

Those Pesky Little Icons

There are only two standard icons on the ST Desktop -- drive icons and the trash icon. The drive icons resemble little filing cabinet drawers and they are used for accessing the disk drives connected to your ST. Dragging files to the trash icon will delete the files from your disk(s).

These icons can be moved around on your Desktop so you can place them wherever you feel most comfortable. To do this, simply place the mouse pointer over the icon you wish to move, press down the left mouse button without releasing it (the icon will "go black") and then "drag" the icon's "ghost" wherever you want to place it on the Desktop. As soon as you release the mouse button, the real icon will move to its new place.

You can also change the names of your disk icons! Let's change the name of the "Drive A" icon just to see how it's done. Move the mouse pointer over to the "filing cabinet" labeled "A" and press the left mouse button once, causing the icon to "go black". Then, move the mouse pointer up to the "Options" Drop Down Menu and click the left mouse button on the "Install Disk Drive..." option. You will be presented with the "Dialog Box" below (a Dialog Box is GEM's way of asking you for input.).

Now, either hit the <Tab> key once or place the mouse pointer over the words "Floppy Disk," and click the left mouse button once to get the cursor on



the Icon Label line. Either <Backspace> over the current name or hit the <Esc> key to instantly erase the name with only one keystroke. Type the words "Disk One" but *do not* hit <Return> when finished. The bold frame around "Cancel" indicates it is the default and hitting a <Return> will cancel what we've just done. Click on the "Install" option and that's all there is to it!

Changing the name of the trash can is a bit more complicated -- you must use an editor, word processor or a program -- so we'll save that for a future article.

Getting a Directory Listing

Using the "double-click" method of opening a directory window can be one of the most frustrating things for the first couple times you try it. In theory, it's quite simple -- quickly "tap" the mouse button twice. The first time I tried, I couldn't get it to work...and the second...and the third...! Some people take to it naturally and can double-click that mouse with no problem. For others, like myself, it was a skill acquired only after diligent effort.

Once you get the hang of it, it's easy...until then, you can use the following steps:

- 1) Place a disk containing some files in Drive A. Use the ST Language Disk that came with your system or a disk of "public domain" software if you received any from your dealer or local User Group.
- 2) Single click the left mouse button on the icon for Drive A.
- 3) Put the mouse pointer over the "File" Drop Down Menu at the very top of the Desktop.
- 4) Click the left mouse button once on the "Open" option and a disk directory "window" will appear on your Desktop.

Any time "double-clicking" is referred to by a software package, you can use the above steps to accomplish the same thing. Sooner or later, though, you will want to get the hang of double-clicking, since it makes using GEM much easier.

Now that you have the disk directory window open, you probably see something similar to Figure 2. The figure shows you the directory with the files shown as icons. Directories consist of either individual files or folders. Folders are simply subdirectories which can, in turn, contain individual files or folders. Due to limitations built into the operating system, you can only have a maximum of 112 files on a floppy disk -- whether single or double sided, and you should never exceed a total of 40 folders across all directories open at one time. (Nasty things happen if you do!)

When viewing directories in icon mode, you will notice that some files look different than others. That is because the ST uses the file extension (characters after the "." in the filename) to deter-

The Three Types of ST File Icons



Folders



Executable
Programs



Data
Files

mine the File Type. The figure above shows how the ST represents executable files, non-executable (data) files and folders.

If you prefer to see your files in a "more recognizable" format, you can view them in Text mode by moving the mouse pointer to the "View" Drop Down Menu at the top of your screen. If you look at the current settings, you will notice a check mark beside the "Show as Icons" entry, indicating that that is the current selection. Simply click the left mouse button while positioning the pointer over the "Show as Text" entry and the directory window will instantly reflect your choice.

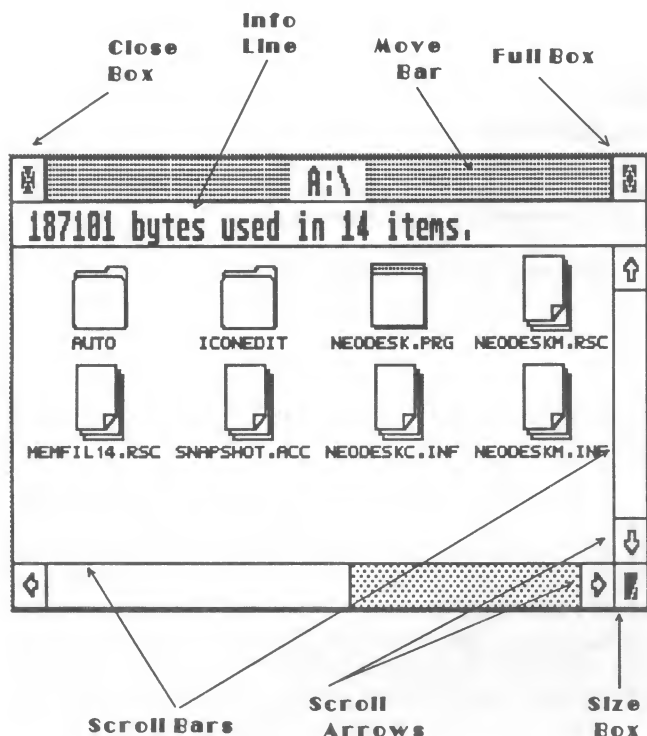
While you were looking at this Drop Down Menu, perhaps you noticed the various Sort Directory choices? Here's a quick description of what each of these choices do:

Sort by Name	Does an alphabetic sort of files using the entire filename
Sort by Date	Displays the directory with the most recently created file shown first
Sort by Size	Shows directory listings in descending order of file size in bytes (i.e., largest file first)
Sort by Type	Similar to name, alphabetically sorts by file extension. This way, all files with similar extensions (such as .PRG or .PIC) will be grouped together

The default setting for this is Sort by Name... again, you can tell which option is currently selected because it will have a check mark next to it. Place the mouse pointer over the Sort option you want and click the left mouse button once. The disk directory now appears sorted as you have asked.

Once you have a disk directory window open, the contents of the window will remain the same even if you remove the disk from the drive and put a new disk in the drive. To update the directory window's contents, simply press the <Esc> key.

Parts of a GEM Window



Learning to do Windows

Windows are a fundamental part of GEM-based programs, and learning how to manipulate a directory window will help you deal with any GEM window. The figure above is a directory window with all the various parts labeled.

Clicking on the "Close Box" closes the window, removing it from the Desktop. The "Full Box" is like a toggle switch. The first time you click on it, the window expands to its maximum size, usually filling the entire Desktop. Click on the Full Box again, and the window automatically shrinks back to its original size.

The horizontal and vertical Scroll Bars are used to look at the contents of the window when there are more items in a window than can be displayed at one time. The window will represent the portion of "hidden" entries by shading part of the Scroll Bar(s). You can scroll through a window in a number of ways.

1. Clicking on the Scroll Arrows will move the display one entry in the direction the arrow points. So, if your disk contains ten files, but your directory window is only large enough to display two files at a time, clicking on the arrow adjacent to the shading will cause the window to display one new file while a file that was previously displayed scrolls out of view. If there are no "hidden" items in the direction a scroll arrow points, clicking on the arrow does nothing. If the unshaded portion of the

Scroll Bar is tight up against the Scroll Arrow Box, there are no "hidden" entries in that direction.

2. Placing the mouse pointer over some part of the shaded portion of the Scroll Bar and then clicking the left mouse button once will cause the window to move the current window's size worth of entries in the indicated direction. For instance, if your disk contains ten files and your directory window is only wide enough to display two files at a time, clicking on the shaded scroll area will display the next two files on the disk while the original two files scroll out of view.

3. If you wish to move quickly from one end of a window to the other, or to a specific area of the window, you can place the mouse pointer over the unshaded portion of the Scroll Bar, press and hold down the left mouse button and drag the unshaded part into the shaded portion. As you move into the shaded area, you will notice a "ghost" image of the unshaded portion moving with the mouse pointer. You will also notice the directory window is not updated as you move. When you release the mouse button, the Scroll Bar's unshaded portion will then move and the display will be updated.

Probably the two most useful features as far as tidying up the Desktop is concerned are the Size Window Box and the Move Bar. To resize the window, place the mouse pointer over the Size Window Box, press and hold down the left mouse button and move the mouse to change the window's dimensions. A ghost window will be displayed, and

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you should use this image to judge the window's resizing. Once you release the mouse button, the actual directory window will shrink or expand to fill the area marked by the ghost window.

Moving a window is similar in execution to resizing -- simply place the mouse pointer over some portion of the Move Bar, press and hold down the left mouse button and move the mouse to move the entire window. As with resizing, a ghost window represents the actual window, which doesn't move until you release the mouse button.

Some Suggestions

Now that you have the basics down, here are some ideas that might be helpful to you in planning your Desktop layout.

If you have a two drive system, you may want to rename the drive icons to "Disk One" and "Disk Two" or "Top Disk" and "Bottom Disk" to visually represent the way the drives are actually configured. Also, if you have one single and one double sided disk, you may want to add "SD" or "DD" to differentiate the two drives.

On a two drive system, setting up the Desktop as shown below will cut down on the distance you need to move your mouse to select the various icons/windows. This Desktop has two drive icons -- one floppy and one hard drive. Since there is no

second floppy connected to the system, the Drive B icon has been removed using the Install Disk Drive entry in the Options menu.

Finally, if children will be using your ST or you just want to make it impossible to inadvertently delete files from your disks, move a directory window directly over the trash icon. Any time you wish to delete a file, you will have to move the directory window out of the way, but your inquisitive 5-year-old won't be able to destroy your software library!

Saving Your Hard Work

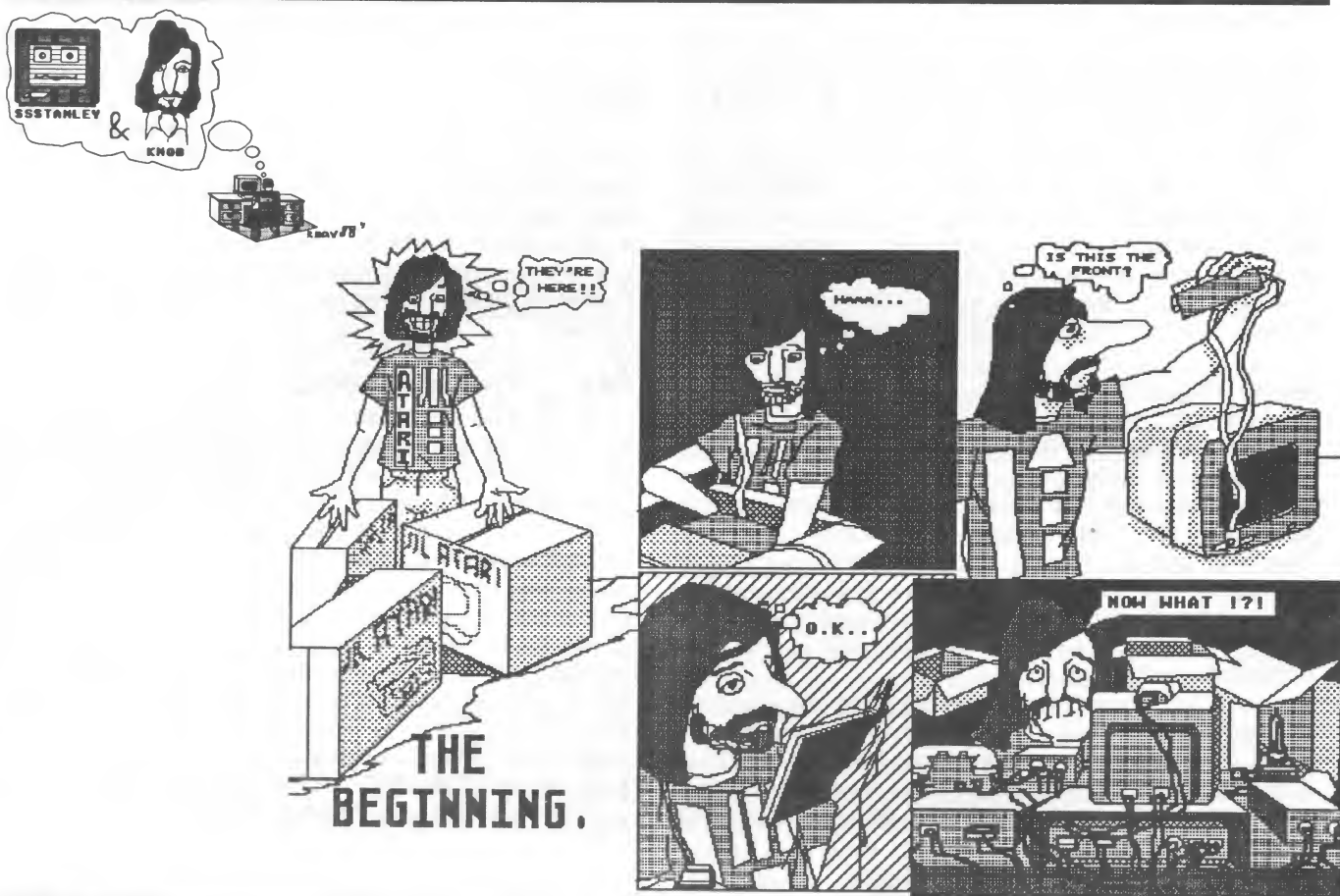
Now that you've set up an organized Desktop, let's save it for future use. Make sure you have your "boot disk" in Drive A (use the Language Disk that came with your ST if you don't have a boot disk already) and that the disk is not write-protected. Move the mouse pointer up to the Options menu and click on the "Save Desktop" entry. If you own a newer model ST or a Mega, you will be asked if you really want to save the Desktop; if you own an older ST, you won't be asked. The computer will write a file to the disk called DESKTOP.INF. Now, every time you turn your computer on with this disk in the drive -- or any disk containing a copy of this DESKTOP.INF -- the Desktop will appear exactly as it did when you saved it.

Desk File View Options

The screenshot shows an Atari ST Desktop with two file windows open. The left window is titled 'A:\' and shows a list of files and folders with their sizes. The right window is titled 'C:\' and shows a list of files and folders with their sizes. Between the windows are icons for a Floppy Disk, a Hard Disk, and a Garbage can.

A:\		C:\	
187101 bytes used in 14 ite		213197 bytes used in 32 ite	
AUTO		8BIT	
ICONEDIT		8UP	
NEODESK PRG	81958	DB	
NEODESKM RSC	31632	EMAIL	
NEODESKC RSC	29286	IBMUP	
MEMFIL14 ACX	21959	MAC	
NEOQUEUE ACX	11121	MAM	
MEMFIL14 RSC	4396	MAMUP	
SNAPSHOT ACC	2688	MENU	
NEODESKC INF	1287	PUBLISH	
NEODESKM INF	1217	STDOWN	
PALLETE ACX	1053	STUP	
DESKTOP INF	488	SYSTEM	
CAPTURE TXT	16	BB/ST TOS	152279
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Sample of an ST Desktop Organized for Ease of Access to All Items

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Universal Item Selector 2.0

by Bill and Pattie Rayl

The Universal Item Selector for the ST is one of those indispensable items no STer should be without. A few days ago, Application and Design Software's president, Rod MacDonald, informed us that version 2.0 of the Selector is now available. Here's some of the new version's capabilities:

- Improved "Show Info" that gives all the disk info you could need, and even tells you free memory
- Formats in 9/10 sectors, 80/81/82 tracks
- Faster sort directory routines, including No Sort
- Now compatible with Turbo-ST, Easel, etc.
- FIND feature finds a file, no matter how deeply nested, and sets your PATH to that file
- Up to 4 templates for directory display
- Templates and Formatting preferences can be set as default...no need to reset them each time
- Allows for Show/Hide of files. Hidden files are displayed in "light" text
- Show Info on more than one selected file gives a sum of the files' sizes

All this and much more! New price is \$19.95 and owners of the old version can upgrade for the \$4 difference. Application and Design Software, 226 NW 'F' St, Grants Pass, OR 97526, (503)476-0071.

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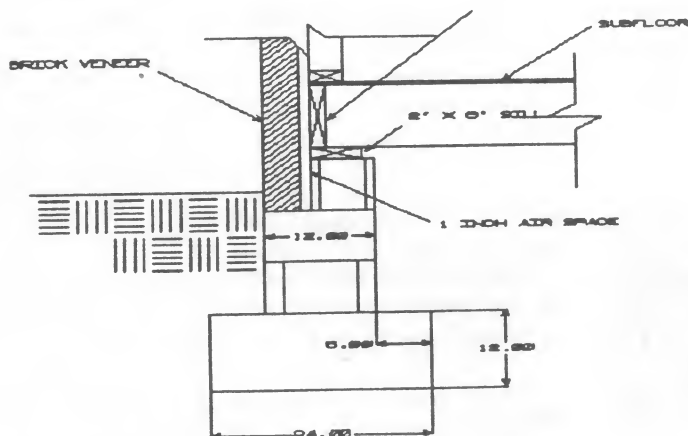
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MicroCAD News, November '87

Computer Aided Design for the Atari ST systems is now available at a price that anyone can afford, and features that rival systems costing thousands of dollars more!! Athena II has what it takes to do the job. Whether you are a student in college or a seasoned professional, Athena II is the CAD package for you. Easy to use menus will have you up and running in minutes! Athena II is available NOW at your local Atari Dealer!

NeoDesk -- the Alternative Desktop

ST Software Review by Bill Rayl

Every once in a while, a piece of software or hardware comes along that is so useful everyone should own it. NeoDesk is just such a product. Billed as "The Complete Desktop Alternative for all Atari ST Computer Systems," NeoDesk is the closest thing to a perfect GEM desktop available for the 16bit Ataris.

How Close is "Close to Perfect?"

When I first saw a message posted on Delphi by a company called Gribnif Software, I didn't know if NeoDesk was for real or just a late April Fool's joke. The "advertisement" for Gribnif's NeoDesk made a number of claims that seemed plausible enough, but almost everything I'd ever wished for in the ST Desktop was on the list of NeoDesk's features...and then some! The most amazing part was the retail price for making nearly all my ST dreams come true -- an amazingly low \$29.95. "C'mon," I thought, "No way this can be for real."

Never being one to give in to skepticism (I'm an optimist at heart -- I'm still a dedicated Atarian!), I decided to call Gribnif. Well, ok, I actually got my wife to do it... To my surprise, someone actually answered (Rick Flashman, author of the manual for NeoDesk and the "Lock and Key for the ST" article that appeared in the April issue of MAM.). Gribnif was for real, or so Rick assured us, and a review copy was on the way.

A couple days and a few hundred "I still don't believe it" later, NeoDesk was delivered to my door. I immediately locked myself away in the computer room, zipped through the 28-page manual, and was up and running in under half an hour. A few hours later, after trying every option in the manual and finding not a single bug or glitch, my previous "I don't believe it's real" became "I can't believe it's so good and only \$30!"

Features

What makes NeoDesk so good? First of all, it is a very clean and polished piece of software. The NeoDesktop has a friendlier "feel" than the standard desktop, and when it comes to features, comparing the ST Desktop to the NeoDesktop is like comparing Space Invaders to Dungeon Master! Here are just a few of the things that make NeoDesk a real "gem" of a program:

Program, data and batch file icons can be placed on the NeoDesktop. This is very handy for often-used programs that happen to be in a folder on your disk. Simply drag the icon to your Desktop, and you can run the program without searching three folders deep to get to it each time!

All Drop-down Menu commands have keyboard equivalents.

Floppy disks can be formatted in 79, 80, 81 or 82 sectors/9 or 10 tracks per sector. NeoDesk can also copy/duplicate disks formatted in any of these options -- using the standard Desktop, the ST would crash attempting to copy a whole disk formatted over 80 sectors. Also, if you're in the middle of formatting or copying and decide to do something else, holding down the UNDO key (or Control-C) will abort the format or copy.

The "Show Information" command is much more powerful. When used on a drive, NeoDesk shows statistics like tracks per sector, sectors per disk and even allows you to create or change the disk Volume Name. "Show Information" on a file allows you to set the time/date stamp on the file to the current system date (referred to as "touching").

Selecting a file icon inside a directory window causes a display of the file size in bytes, date stamp and read/write status to appear at the top of the directory (the status or info line). If you select more than one file, the sum of the file sizes appears, taking the guess-work out of trying to copy files to floppy without running out of space.

"Sort by Type" does not sort by file extension. Instead, it actually sorts by type -- folders first, followed by executable files (.TOS, .TTP, .PRG, .APP), then data files and finally batch files. There's also a "No Sort" command which shows files in the order that they were physically stored on disk, a very handy feature when having problems with files in an AUTO folder (some programs require they be stored in a specific order in an Auto folder.).

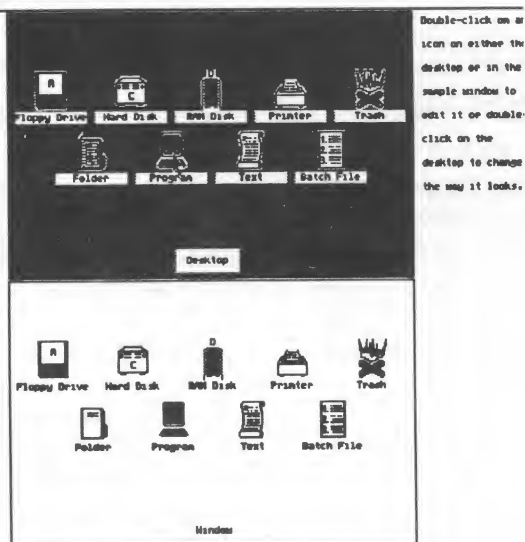
As you've probably guessed by now, NeoDesk supports the use of batch files, including .BTP files (Batch file Takes Parameters). Batch files can be used to automate tedious jobs like copying often used files to a ramdisk or compiling a program. An auto batch file can also be used to automatically execute at system bootup.

Warm and cold system resets can be done by holding down a series of keys, eliminating the need to reach around behind your machine to reboot.

This is not a complete list of all the features in NeoDesk...it's not even *half* of them!

So far, not much has been said here about the NeoDesk icons. NeoDesk supports nine different types of icons, including folders, programs, batch files, data files, a trash icon, a printer icon and three different drive icons -- NeoDesk differentiates between floppy drives, hard drives and ramdisks. An Icon Editor is supplied for customizing

Desk File



NeoDesk's GEM-Based Icon Editor

these icons to your own individual tastes and preferences. The editor is GEM-based and very easy to use, allowing each icon's "data" (standard) or "mask" (selected or on desktop) shapes. Once you have created or modified icons, you can save them to disk for later use. When loading icons, NeoDesk gives the option of loading individual icons (such as the trash icon) or replacing all icons with those found in the icon file.

There is no way in NeoDesk to view files as text (this will be in the next version, due out this fall). At first, I felt this was a drawback, but the icons are much more useful than the standard icons -- the "tradeoff" is definitely worth it.

Also packaged with the system are a couple accessories from Gribnif. NeoQueue is a printer queue that holds up to 10 files and allows you to change the order of files to be printed or to remove a file if you change your mind. Files are placed in the queue by dragging them to the printer icon.

MemFile is a file/sector/memory editor that lets you poke around inside the ST to see what's going on. MemFile comes with its own documentation on the distribution disk, and has been released into the public domain by Dan Wilga, NeoDesk and MemFile's author. The disk comes with StartGEM, a PD program allowing autoboot of GEM programs at system startup, and COMMAND, a PD command line interpreter. Oh, yea...a copy of Atari's Control Panel is also on the disk, mainly for setting the desktop colors.

The whole program, when installed, takes up 145K of RAM -- a fact which is prominently displayed on the outside of the packaging. If that

sounds bad to you, you're obviously not a veteran STer from TOS-on-Disk days! NeoDesk will run perfectly well with 512K, but I don't recommend it. And, if you frequently run memory-intensive programs such as Desktop Publishing packages or Word Perfect on a 1040, NeoDesk may not be very practical for you. At least 1 Meg of RAM is recommended by Gribnif. (It would be really nice to see a NeoDesk cartridge!)

Other problems that exist are incompatibilities with the following programs:

CAD3D 2.0 from Antic (all versions up to 2.02) and Graph.Prg from Timeworks overwrite NeoDesk, causing the ST to crash when exiting those programs -- the programs themselves run fine, it is only after exiting that the problem occurs, and the ST should be rebooted when this happens.

The OutPrint or OutPut function of Easy Draw does not execute the output program. Instead, it exits you to NeoDesk where you can run the output program.

Some programs, such as Publishing Partner and ST Writer Elite (v.2.3) mess up the mouse pointer after exiting the program. To work around this, Gribnif has added keyboard commands to send "mouse on" and "mouse off" calls, which will clear up the garbage the mouse pointer leaves on your desktop (mouse droppings?).

Other than the above incompatibilities and the memory usage, there are no drawbacks to this software for the average (or above-average) user. One minor inconvenience is that NeoDesk does not support low resolution on color systems. That means most games can't be run from NeoDesk, but most are autoboot disks anyway, and no one seriously prefers low resolution for everyday usage (no one I know, anyway!).

The only thing I would like to see added in a future update would be the option of individualized icons for executable programs. Under the current NeoDesktop, it shouldn't be too hard to look for a .NIC (NeoDesk Icon) file to correspond with a program and display that icon for that file.

For example, if EasyDraw.Prg had an EasyDraw.NIC in the same directory, NeoDesk could display a personalized Easy Draw icon. If the .NIC file didn't exist, a standard program icon would be used. Though this would no doubt slow the program down a bit, it would be a nice touch, and I hope Gribnif at least makes some attempt at individual icons.

Overall, this software is an exceptional value for the price. Though it may not suit everyone due to the loss of available memory, the trade will be worth it to many others. If it does nothing else, NeoDesk points the way to a truly functional ST Desktop. For this alone, NeoDesk is worth the price.

NeoDesk is available from Gribnif Software, PO Box 350, Hadley, MA 01035, (413) 584-7887. Runs in color or monochrome and is NOT copy protected.

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Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
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Member at Large	Jim Boyce	522-4074
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are \$10.00 per year, or \$14.20 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1pm to approx. 4pm. The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson, MI.



CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are \$15.00 per year and entitle members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

The meetings take place at the MSU Physics- Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics- Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and appointed Officers of CHAOS

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Presidential Address

June is the beginning of the slow season for computer use and computer clubs. It's always a little problem to make it through the summer because attendance and revenue are down, while expenses remain the same. As you go about your summer business, don't forget to stop in at a meeting or two!!

I'd like to thank Mike Fildee for a fine job in coordinating his first ST meeting. Things went very well, and I am thrilled to have a new volunteer helping out. Doug Bell is assisting Mike, so thank them both when you see them.

There are a few things in the offing as I write. The ST SIG is trying to put together a MIDI-Maze party. Guests will be welcome. The time, place and facility are to be determined. Also under consideration is a CHAOS picnic some Sunday afternoon -- maybe here at my home, maybe somewhere else.

Our attendance at the MAXIT show paid for itself. The sponsors and volunteers for MAXIT are quite pleased with this year's results. In the meantime, we and others, are looking at a possible fall Computer Show and Sale. If it happens, it would be a buyer's show with LOTS of discounts and bargains. The Atarian's dream...

Leo Sell



GENE/EE ATARI GROUP

Serving the Flint area

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari Owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive (Near Atherton and Hammerburg rd.). During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday workshop at 9:30 a.m. Membership is \$15 and includes a subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine.

Meeting dates

June 8 General meeting

NO meetings in July and August!

Information: Jerry Cross 313-736-4544

FACTS BBS 313-736-3920

8bit Disk Library

Hello Atarians! Have you stayed in and programmed or did the weather send you fleeing into real world? We did have some rainy days, thus giving me time to put together 4 more library disks for the month. Here is what is new for May.....

Disk #261 This is a Utilities disk. It has MTOS multi tasking operating system. This is only a sample version. It has the ability to run more than one program (or task) at a time. HDRESTOR.OBJ/HDBACKUP.OBJ A hard disc backup and restore for SpartaDOS. EL-EGANT.NLQ/ROMAN.NLQ/SENATOR.NLQ -- These

are Daisy Dot II fonts. PAL.COM -- Read the docs. This is more of an ad for the real program. It sounds like it is well worth the money. If you use the program let me know what for and how you like it.

DISK #262 Games! FORTRESS/FORTRES2 -- Two arcade maze games. The graphics are nice and you bounce off the walls real smooth. WATOR.OBJ -- This is an aquamarine population game. Can you balance the ecology?

DISK #263 CADXE. Computer Aided Drawing -- 3-D drawing program. This is shareware written by David Foster. If you like and use this, it would give GAG a good name to support the programmer. I'm well aware of the work and frustration in writing a good program.

DISK #264 GTERM. Another BBS program. This is called the Evening Star BBS. Boot without basic to autload. (hold OPTION key and turn on the computer). New Disks for June....

DISK #265 SECURITY.BAS. This is a well documented program for setting up a computer controlled burglar alarm system for your home or office. Requires sensors and other parts to operate, but this is very nicely explained in the docs.

DISK #266 Pinball Games. CREEPSHO.OBJ and BLAKHOLE.OBJ. Test your hand at these fast and furious ball chasers. This needs to be booted without basic and loaded (Option L) from DOS. Good Luck.

I have another modem program ,play BRKOUT while downloading, and more RLE picture (for adults only, id required) disks coming your way also. I just got them and have not had time to set them up yet. There should be quite a list to pick from to keep you busy through the summer months. Come to the June meeting and check them out.

That completes this month's disks. Stay tuned to your local users' group for more to come....Until then live long and program!

Ed Kalush

President's Report

Over the past year we have purchased several pieces of software so GAG members could check them out and try them. The purpose of this was to let the members know what the software was like, so they could decide if they wanted to purchase it. However, this has not been very successful. It could be up to three or four months before someone could get hands on the package. To correct this problem, it was voted at the last meeting to try something a little different.

We will now be purchasing programs, and give them away to members with one little catch. They must write a review of the program to be published in MAM. This is a small price to pay for free software. I am now looking around for some new software packages to review, and we will start this program in a few months. I will be sending all members a note informing them of the changes, and getting the necessary information from them if they want to be included in the drawing. This program includes current members only, including our out-of-state members. I will need to know what type of equipment you have access to, so that we don't send an 8bit program to an ST user.

New catalog updates are in the works, and I hope to have them in the mail by mid-June.

There will not be Saturday workshops for June through August because the school will be closed for the summer. Also, the July and August General meeting is

canceled. If you need a program from our disk library, you can pick them up at Sy-Draft, located on Corunna Rd between Linden and I-75. If you have any programming problems, contact me and I will get you in touch with someone who can help you out. We have several members who are more than happy to answer questions.

Be sure to read your MAM next month! There should be a whole lot of news items coming from the Consumer Electronics Show. Several representatives from MAM will be going, and we should have a lot of interesting things in store!

That's it for now. I hope you all have a nice summer, and I'll see you in September.

Jerry Cross



GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus, Corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are \$20/yr..

President	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer	Dave Bryant	
Librarian	Dale Vincent	
Archiver	Dave Oldenburg	
STChairman	Jim Zinke	
SysOp	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS:	(616)657-2665	

From the President...

We had 17 members present at May's meeting. We even had a couple of older members present for information about modems to access the BBS on their STs. This is the place to get your information.

We did a demo on Springboard's "NewsRoom," and passed out the flyer for the 09-July-88 Picnic at my home which was done using the NewsRoom program. Those of you that were there now have a road map and information concerning the picnic.

The picnic starts at 10 a.m. and will end on or about 4 p.m.... I will be passing out more flyers at our next meeting 11-June-88, so if you don't have access to someone who has one already, be at our next meeting.

You can bring family or friends. There is a playground area for younger members, and there is cover for all if the weather is on the damp side. Bring a dish to pass, your own plates and silverware, and something to drink. Cooking will be done in the kitchen if anything needs to be heated. I will provide the usual tables, chairs, trash containers and air-conditioning. We hope to see you there.

We had a 520ST at the meeting this time, but not any ST users. I appreciate Alex Stevens (Our SyOp) bring in his system. Dale Vincent joins our staff of officers as Librarian. We hope to complete additional listings of our program library and books and open up new areas for information related to computers.

We looked at the new Analog format in issue #61. It appears that most of our members are impressed with it as well as the content. We received a program listing for

the Boston Atari Users Group. Our librarians will go over the files to look for anything new or unusual.

The BBS was down for three days last week due to a power supply failure. This is the second one to fail since we started last July. They were both the older type of supplies without vent holes. Mine is currently being used, but I think we will be building one of our own soon. This will also allow us to put in a DC back-up to prevent us from shutting down during power failures. We also have the extra IBM drives installed, so now there are 4 disk drives and a RAM Disk. We are starting to get really professional.

Dave Bryant has been working on his own BBS, and I was able to see several of his menus that he uses. I was greatly impressed, and I think we will be able to use some of his menus on the GKAUG BBS...We are still looking for new title screens for the BBS. We used the "ANIMATOR" program for the one currently in use, and it is available for those of you that wish to have your title screen used on the BBS.

Next Meeting:

1. Analog Disks #59,60,61
2. Demo Font Craft by PineCraft Ent.
3. Librarian Task Force Agenda
4. Last Planning scheduled for picnic
5. Confirmation of July/August as Summer Break for GKAUG

Frank Fellheimer

Great Lakes 'GLASS' - MICHIGAN'S Oldest
Atari 'ST' only Users Group
ST Support I ♥ MY ST!

General meeting: First Thursday (every month) 6 p.m. until 9:00. Meeting at: Athens High School, Troy, MI., Room 1506, 4333 John R, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile Rd.)

From the Desk of the President

Ahhh, Spring...sure makes it hard sometimes to get one's duties done. I was going to write, about I'm not sure what, until I downloaded a text file from a local BBS (you were at the last meeting weren't you?), read it, and found myself calling the Gribnif Software company in Hadley, Maine to ask about a new program from them called NEODESK.

Well sir, next thing I knew I was giving them my Visa number to have them send a copy of the program, all in the interest of the club, of course! I will be demoing it and writing a review for the Michigan Atari Magazine, but want to share a little information about it now. Editable (not edible) Icons; all menu items have keyboard equivalents; GEM rubberband box can be pulled in any direction; windows can have search templates like *.PRG to show only certain files; seven windows open at once instead of the usual four; file copying via memory buffer reduces disk swaps on single drive systems (like having an automatic ram-disk); disk erase by pulling Icon to Trashcan; multiple format methods; windows size themselves to the contents; runs batch files; both cold and warm restarts from desktop and much more than this.

Maybe you can understand why I ordered it, and

there is a price break for user groups ordering three or more packages. The program retails for \$29.95 but we can get it for \$24.95 -- not a great break but not bad. So, watch for the demo and review. Like Byron Johnson said in his May article in MAM regarding ST-Turbo and Universal File Selector, "I think I'm beginning to see a trend here." The ST lives in spite of Atari!

Anyone interested in Word Perfect until they saw the price should look on the back page of ST Informer's May issue. Also, the May/June issue of Atari Explorer ran two reviews of WP, a pro and a con opinion. Congratulations, that is one of the finest and fairest review situations I've seen! I have WP, and noticed the reviewers were using older versions (I have ver. 4.1, 15 April 1988) and even the negative reviewer still had some good thing to say about it. I am terribly pleased with mine! Do believe the bugs are gone now, I can't seem to find any.

Hopefully, as you read this you will also be aware of the new GLASS Public Domain Library catalogs at the General Meeting. We got really tired of stapling the sheets to the wall every month and have used enough staples to build a YUGO GT! So, yours truly burnt the midnight oil creating the catalog. I really feel bad about asking \$1.00 per copy but it's for the club to get another computer for demos. I've noticed that a lot of members haven't taken advantage of the library, and it's mostly because the wall-sheets were a little cryptic, so check out some of the great pd software! Oh yes, addition (read update) sheets are free to every one and are available at General Meetings. If you would like a catalog mailed to you, send a check or money order for \$2.50 to cover postage to our club address below.

I wish to acknowledge the members who have been especially helpful in assisting with their own equipment, help at General Meetings, and attendance at Planning Meetings. Jim Barnhart, who has been bringing in his 1040 keyboard for the last several months so we could have a third computer at meetings. Drew Solomon, a relatively new member, who has been attending Planning Meetings, helped with set-up and tear-down of the General Meetings. Mike Gillie (P.R. Officer), who graces us with his wit and knowledge in the demos and seminars (and supports us on the Cosmic STomper BBS, the "in" place for modem users!). Todd Meitzner (Librarian), who diligently attends to the library and has provided a monitor at critical times. Ken Settle (long-time member and club tekkie), who doctors our equipment and brings computer components when needed. Byron Johnson (Vice-pres.), for his help with the newsletter and bringing in his Indus-GT double-sided drive every month. Whew, I didn't realize the list was going to be so long, and I've just begun. Guess I didn't realize until just now how much this group has become a second family to me! Darn, there I go getting sentimental (sniff, sniff...).

To you members who haven't been able to make it to some of the meetings, you have been missed (and you have missed some good times and give-aways).

Well, I'm getting a little long-winded and have used up one and a half pages of computer screen so I will close for this month. We are always interested in your letters complaint, question, and information to the editor, so drop us a line to... GLASS, PO Box 99737, Troy, MI 48099.

Steve Mileski



GRASS Meeting: July 6, 1988, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W., Time: 6:30 P.M.

George Nosky	President/Treasure	(616)942-1527
2440 Parkridge Dr. S.E. Grand Rapids, Mi. 49506		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616)676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616)866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616)896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616)891-1785
Marek Kulikowicz	Director	(616)957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Membership Chair	(616)784-6230

President's Comments

GRASS extends a hardy welcome to new members Len Brothers and Bruce Robey, both of Wyoming. We also welcome back Jeff Nemic and Al Taylor who renewed their memberships at the May meeting.

A brief discussion was held on whether to hold meetings during the summer months. It was the unanimous vote of the members present to meet throughout the summer. I think this is good for the Club. We will continue to schedule demonstrations of various types. We probably won't have any more raffles until the fall--or do you want some sooner? Let us know.

Chuck Baughman did a fine job of demonstrating 221B Baker Street. After Chuck finished, we raffled it off. John Dunn, who joined us a couple of months ago, was the winner. Congratulations John!

Tim Feenstra kept everyone's eyes glued to the projection screen with his demo of Carrier Force. I can see how you can get hooked on a game like that. Tim says it can take 50 to 100 hours to complete a game. It looked fun.

The big news for the Club was our Atari Fair held May 14th. "Unfortunately" for us the weather was great. It was a warm spring day and there were several major events going on. Put that all together and we ended up with a light turn out. It didn't seem to dampen the spirits of our members who did a super job working the Fair. I asked a number of people at the end if they wanted to do this again. Everyone said "yes".

Next time we should try February or November when people are hunting for something to do. Anyway, the Fair was a *big* success. We picked up new members, sold software and helped people with their systems. Gerry Borysiak joins me in thanking the people who duplicated disks, made banners, organized refreshments, greeted guests, cleaned up the room and lent moral support.

These people are: Chuck Baughman, Charlene Bird, Bob Bulliment, Brian Draper, John Dunn, Tim Feenstra, Steve Gilbert, Mark Haaksma, Gary Heitz, Wayne Moose, Heather Nosky, Chris Pelton, Con Scooros, Dean Streb and his mother, Marvin and Connie Waid, Greg Williams and Lonnie Zamarripa. I hope I didn't forget anyone. If I did, I apologize.

Greg Williams is bringing his ICD Multi I/O to the June meeting. This "box" and SpartaDos X really add flexibility and power to the 8Bit. I will put this on Steve Gilbert's BBS so you will have it before the June meeting. See you at the July meeting.

George Nosky

M.A.C.E. Journal

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive MAM as part of the \$20 annual dues, and may attend monthly meetings the third Tuesday of each month at the Southfield Civic Center. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. Eightbit and ST disks are \$5 each. The ST sig meets on the first Tuesday of the month. If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from the library.

Meeting Minutes

The May meeting was the annual birthday celebration. MACE is now seven years old! Don Neff showed a Birthday demo by Shawn Cassidy of the Windsor Atari User Group. Don announced library disks would be available at discounted prices for this evening in celebration of the 7th birthday.

There have been no submissions of artwork for the MACE Logo contest. Members should see Heather Neff for details. The purpose is to come up with a logo for the club's section of MAM.

Pattie Snyder-Rayl discussed an amendment to the Constitution allowing non-members to buy disks. (See attached.) The members decided that the normal \$5 rate for disks is high and authorized the officers to evaluate the price. Members will vote on the amendment at the July meeting.

It has been six months since MACE joined the MAM "family," so discussion of whether to maintain affiliation was held. Member Mike Lechkun said MAM has received glowing reviews from Computer Shopper for two consecutive months. Comments seemed to center on the loss of MACE's unique identity in contrast to the old MACE Journal. Don noted again very few members are submitting articles for publication so they have no one to blame but themselves for this. There were no dissenting votes in the referendum to maintain affiliation.

The MACE Ace Award was presented to ex-President Tom Sturza for keeping MACE alive during turbulent times 18 months ago. As Don put it, "If not for Tom, we wouldn't be here tonight." Tom received a round of applause. Sharie Middlebrook, SysOp (Wizop!) of MACE WeST, was presented a Thank You card and a dozen roses for her continuing effort. Sharie's endless well of support for our club is greatly appreciated.

The second half of the meeting was Swap Night while soft drinks and cake were served. Jim Kennedy presided over the drawings for door prizes.

Michael Olin

Amendment to the MACE Constitution

That Section D be changed to read "The 8bit disk librarian shall be responsible for maintaining the public domain 8bit disk library and related documentation, as well as, copying and distributing library disks. He/She may sell these disks to non-members at a higher price than charged to members." and "The 16bit librarian shall be responsible for maintaining the public domain 16bit disk library and related documentation, as well as, copying and distributing library disks. He/She may sell these disks to non-members at a higher price than charged to members." Final discussion and vote will take place at the July meeting.



TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: June 11, 1988 & July 16, 1988.

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Neil Demo	ST Disk Lib.	792-0311

Club dues are \$20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bits and ST's, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8-bit disks and 50 ST disks. 8bit disks cost \$1.00 each, and ST disks cost \$2.00 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew or you haven't even joined yet, then do it now!

The President Speaks Out

I'm going to miss my first meeting in some time, so Marty will have to run the meeting in June. I'm heading up north for some sun and fun and (groan) the wife won't let me take my computer! Any way, I expect you all to carry on with your normal vim and vigor... See you all in July!

Hot Flashes from the Future!

Coming in June, the STers will get a chance to see a new game called Empire, donated to TAG by Interstel. John Zekeman will demo Empire, and Al Jennings will demo Dungeon Master, the number one seller from FTL! On the 8bit side, the adventure group will be showing some of the stuff they've got done, and they will be discussing goodies to come in the future! Show up and join in the fun.

RelicST to Relish

The meeting started out with nominations for the coming elections in June. Somehow I got nominated for president again, even though I offered double my current president's salary to anyone willing to take up the torch! (I guess no one is interested in 2 x \$0.00!) Marty Schmidt got nominated for the office of treasurer, and once again he is a shoe in. The only office that offers anyone a chance to vote is ST disk librarian. Here we have the choice of two-month incumbent Neil Demo against the ex-eightbitter Al Jennings! Boy, that should bring a lot of mud slinging! Ted Beauchamp was nominated for the office of 8bit disk librarian and Piece's of Eight columnist, and Char Davis was nominated as 8bit meeting coordinator. Show up in June and help these new nominees get voted into office.

Once the meeting split up, the first ST demo began. Al Jennings demoed Spectrum512, and he didn't do his homework (tsk, tsk, tsk)! The program packs a lot of power (I know, I own it!) but you couldn't tell with the demo. The demo ended when Marty voted it as the "Worst Demo" in TAG history. But really Al, we know that you've been busy moving into a new house, and we were just having some fun!

Tom Wheeler then demoed Quantum Paintbox, a graphics program that allows you display 4096 colors at once on the screen! Tom said that only two things he didn't like about the program were the copy protection (you look up a word in the manual) and the method used for drawing. Instead of simply selecting a color from a

palette and drawing (like in Spectrum) you have to plan your picture and set up multiple palettes of colors which will only be used on certain portions of the screen.

LeRoy Valley finished up with a nice disk full of utilities which included ARCshell II 1.91, Desk Manager 2.0 (a hard disk boot utility), PM Cataloger (a utility to print out graphics from your Print Master libraries), and his NX-1000 printer accessory, developed on Laser-C.

Pieces Of Eight

The subject of this month's meeting was drawing programs. First Nelson Green demoed RAMbrandt from the Antic Catalog. The program has five different modes which give various resolutions, and numbers of colors. The maximum number of colors is sixteen. The user has the option of using the keyboard, joystick or touch tablet. The program supports the Koala Pad or the Atari Touch Tablet. When finished, the save command allows you to save ten pictures to a disk. The disk operation seemed unusually slow. Also after saving the picture we were not able to get the program to reboot.

The next demo was of a program out of Analog called BBK Artist. This is a machine language program which uses two screens to design displays. The first screen is a menu screen. By using the joystick, you pick the function you want to do, then the program switches you to the second screen where you actually draw the art. When you are ready for a different function you simply press option to get back to the menu.

Next the eight bitters discussed starting to design a text adventure. We looked at several articles Char brought in on designing an adventure game. She also had a program called The Wizard which helps you construct a game. This looked quite interesting, but, since the real purpose is to learn a little about Basic, it was decided to try and dissect a Basic Program to see how they do it. One candidate for the operating table was Nightshade which is a fairly short text adventure from Analog written by Clayton Walnum.

For next month, the decision was for everybody interested create a scenario and draw up a twenty-room map with some ideas of objects to use in the game. The group will then decide the best one to use and start writing a story line.

8bit Equipment Volunteers

Club	800 XL
Nelson Greene	Monitor
Ted Beauchamp	Computer

ST Equipment Volunteers

Tom Wheeler	1040ST
Bryant Lafreniere	Monitor

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!



The Washtenaw Atari Users' Group! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm. Meetings are held at State Street Computer in downtown Ann Arbor. Membership fees are \$15 per year; 8bit disks cost \$2 and 16bit disks are \$3. When you come to a meeting, please bring a chair if you wish to sit down during demos.

General Meeting 5/10/88

This meeting was about "Hack & Slash" which dealt with getting into things like disks and computers and modifying them. Mike Pieronek showed some of the tools provided in the SpartaDOS Toolkit for the 8bit machines, as well as describing the wonders of SpartaDOS itself (very similar to the MS-DOS used on IBM PC's). The disk/sector editor from this toolkit is very good in that it can automatically follow the sectors of a given file through the disk, and it will also work on a hard drive; however, most of the features of this editor will not work on non-SpartaDOS disks. The last item of interest for the 8bits was the showing of a detailed video on how to install the RamMaster 256K memory upgrade.

For the ST, Bill Rayl demonstrated a new utility called 'Neodesk.' This program replaces the GEM desktop with a similar desktop environment that has many more features, including batch file support, up to 7 windows open at once, the ability to pull an icon from a window and leave it out on the desktop for easier access, and many more. Craig Harvey showed a public domain disk/sector editor for the ST called DLII. This is still a preliminary version of this program, but it was written by the author of Uniterm and is a very complete utility.

Business

The president reminded us the officer elections will be held at the June meeting, and, to give the new officers something to get started with, the topics of the July and August meetings have been set as Programming Languages (July) and Hardware Projects (August). Besides election night, the June meeting will also be a flea market (swap meet), so bring any hardware and commercial software that you want to sell, and don't forget some money to satisfy your own desires! Also, don't forget that the meetings are being held at State Steet Computer these days.

Craig Harvey

From The Prez...

The June meeting of WAUG is going to be one of the most important meetings of the year, and I encourage all

members to make a special effort to attend. The election of new officers is a task that should not be taken lightly as it will, obviously, directly affect the future of our club. There are many members in our midst who are quite capable of taking on some of the duties/responsibilities of running WAUG, and I am anxious to see a strong showing of volunteers. In the past several months, it has become increasingly evident the general membership needs to become more actively involved in planning and orchestrating club meetings. This has to happen soon lest the core group of staunch supporters suffers Classic Burn-Out Syndrome, and it definitely has to happen before a feeling of "someone else will do it" takes hold.

Looking back on the past year, (Where did the time go? Seems like just yesterday we were scrambling to make plans for the Atari Magic Show!) I ran across my first "From the Prez" article and was pleased to note the accomplishment of some of the goals the officers defined in their first meeting: 1) an increase in membership from 40 to 70+, 2) the purchase of club-owned hardware, and 3) additional exposure so that Atarians in southeastern Michigan would have the opportunity to know that we exist.

I am most grateful to all the persons who helped in any way to make these forward strides possible, and special thanks to all the officers who worked so hard and gave so much of their personal time.

In closing, I would like to make the usual plea that has come to be expected from computer club presidents. The future of this organization is inextricably tied to the continuing active involvement of its members. Anything you can do that might help your fellow Atarian better understand his/her equipment is information worth sharing. Be it a demo, an article for the Newsletter, a few hours of time helping an officer in the performance of his/her duties, or a suggestion on how to improve the club, your help is always appreciated and actively solicited.

Michael Olin

Software Engineering Glossary of Product Terminology

New	Different colors from previous version.
All New	Software is not compatible with previous version.
Exclusive	We're the only one who has documentation.
Unmatched	Almost as good as the competition.
Design Simplicity	Developed on a shoestring budget
Foolproof Operation	All parameters are hard-coded.
Advanced Design	Upper management doesn't understand it.
It's Here at Last	Released a 26-week project in 48 weeks.
Field Tested	Manufacturing doesn't have a test system.
High Accuracy	All the directories compare.
Years of Development	Finally got one to work.
Unprecedented Performance	Nothing ever ran this slow before.
Revolutionary	Disk drive go round and round.
Breakthrough	It finally booted on the first try.
Futuristic	It will only run on a next generatin supercomputer.
No Maintainance	Impossible to fix.
Performance Proven	Works through Beta test.
Meets Quality Standards	It compiles without errors.
Satisfaction Guaranteed	We'll send you another pack if it fails for any reason.
Stock Item	We shipped it once and can do it again.

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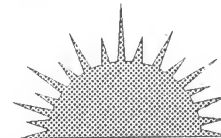
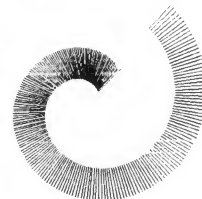
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